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Miss America

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ALL-THRILLING
PATSY WALKER
COMICS
AND
TRUE-
TO-
LIFE
STORIES!

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"STREAMLINE makes me feel like sixteen again, it slenderizes my waist-line and does wonders for my figure. It's the most comfortable I ever had." Mrs. J. H. Spencer, San Francisco, California.

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"STREAMLINE fits better and feels better than any supporter I ever had, with STREAMLINE I can wear a smaller size skirt." Mrs. T. Walsh, Long Island City, N. Y.

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YOU, TOO, CAN BE MORE BEAUTIFUL CHARMING and POPULAR!

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"What has 'she' got that I haven't?"—Do you often ask yourself this question, wondering why some girls are popular and happy while others are lonesome and depressed? Here's the secret of popularity—you must "highlight" and dramatize your strong points, and hide your weak ones. When you learn how to do this, you have learned the "inside story" of a girl's success!

TAKE THOSE KINKS OUT of Your Appearance and Personality

Now you can have an amazing book, "BETTER THAN BEAUTY", by Helen Valentine and Alice Thompson (famous beauty, fashion and etiquette authorities), which tells you in exact detail how thousands of others have dramatized their charming points—and achieved astonishing popularity. You, too can learn—almost at a glance—how to highlight your most favorable characteristics of figure, of face, of mannerisms, of intellect. You, too, can learn how to be an interesting companion and conversationalist. You, too, can learn to be the kind of a girl that other girls envy and boys admire. "BETTER THAN BEAUTY" reveals to you the "mysteries" of feminine appeal and how you can quickly develop your own enticing charms.

FOR EVERY GIRL WHO WANTS TO BE LOVELY

"BETTER THAN BEAUTY"

A Complete Guide to Charm

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10. If you are fat, how to reduce safely, easily.
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14. When is a girl smartly dressed?
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19. Building your wardrobe.
20. Accessories are important relating to several costumes.
21. What men don't like in women's clothes or grooming.
22. How to achieve that well-dressed appearance that makes people notice you.

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23. How to meet people in cordial and poised manners.
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33. Manners and clothes of yesterday compared to those of today.
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35. How to make yourself popular and sought after.
36. Charm is like a beautiful dress. It can be acquired.

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PUMPKIN PIE . . .

How about a pumpkin pie to ease Mother's dessert problem for Sunday dinner? You can make it with canned pumpkin, of course, but if it's pumpkin time, the real thing can't be beat.

Wash the pumpkin, cut it across in half, and take out the seeds and strings. Then put it in the oven in a pan, shell side up, and bake at moderate heat until it begins to fall apart. Remove, scrape the pulp from the shell, and put it through a ricer.

Combine 2½ cups of the prepared pumpkin with 2 egg yolks, 2/3 of a cup of dark brown sugar, half a teaspoon each of cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg, 1 cup of milk, and half a cup of cream. Beat the whites of 2 eggs with a little salt until stiff, and fold them into the pumpkin mixture. Fill pie shells and bake for 15 minutes in a hot oven and then for 30 minutes longer at moderate heat.

This makes two pies—one to eat hot and one to eat cold!

CRANBERRY CAPERS . . .

Cape Codders are great ones for cranberries, as you probably know, but there's no reason why those of you from other places can't get in on the good eating! For instance, a favorite dessert is steamed cranberry pudding, made like this:

Mix a cup of flour, sifted with 1 teaspoon of baking powder and half a teaspoon of salt, with 1/3 of a cup of brown sugar and half a cup of bread crumbs. Work in 2/3 of a cup of suet, and add a cup of cranberries, washed well and picked over. Mix in 1 whole egg, beaten, and about 1/3 of a cup of water.

Turn the mixture into a greased mold, and steam for 2 hours. Serve hot with either hard sauce or foamy sauce. Whipped cream is good with it, too, if your figure, both financial and physical, can stand it!

BREAD BUSINESS . . .

Your lunch box will welcome this one—and it's equally good for an afternoon snack with a glass of milk. Oatmeal bread has a nutty flavor all its own which has to be eaten to be known.

Let 1 cup of rolled oats steam for 1 hour in 2 cupfuls of boiling water. Then let it cool, and add 1 yeast cake, softened in half a cup of lukewarm water. Now stir in half a cup of molasses, 1 teaspoon of salt and a tablespoon of melted shortening. Then 1 cup of flour goes in, and the dough is left to rise.

When the dough is light, add about 5 more cups of flour and knead until smooth, finally forming the bread into two loaves. Place them into greased pans, let them rise, and then bake them in a moderate oven until golden brown. About one hour should do the trick.

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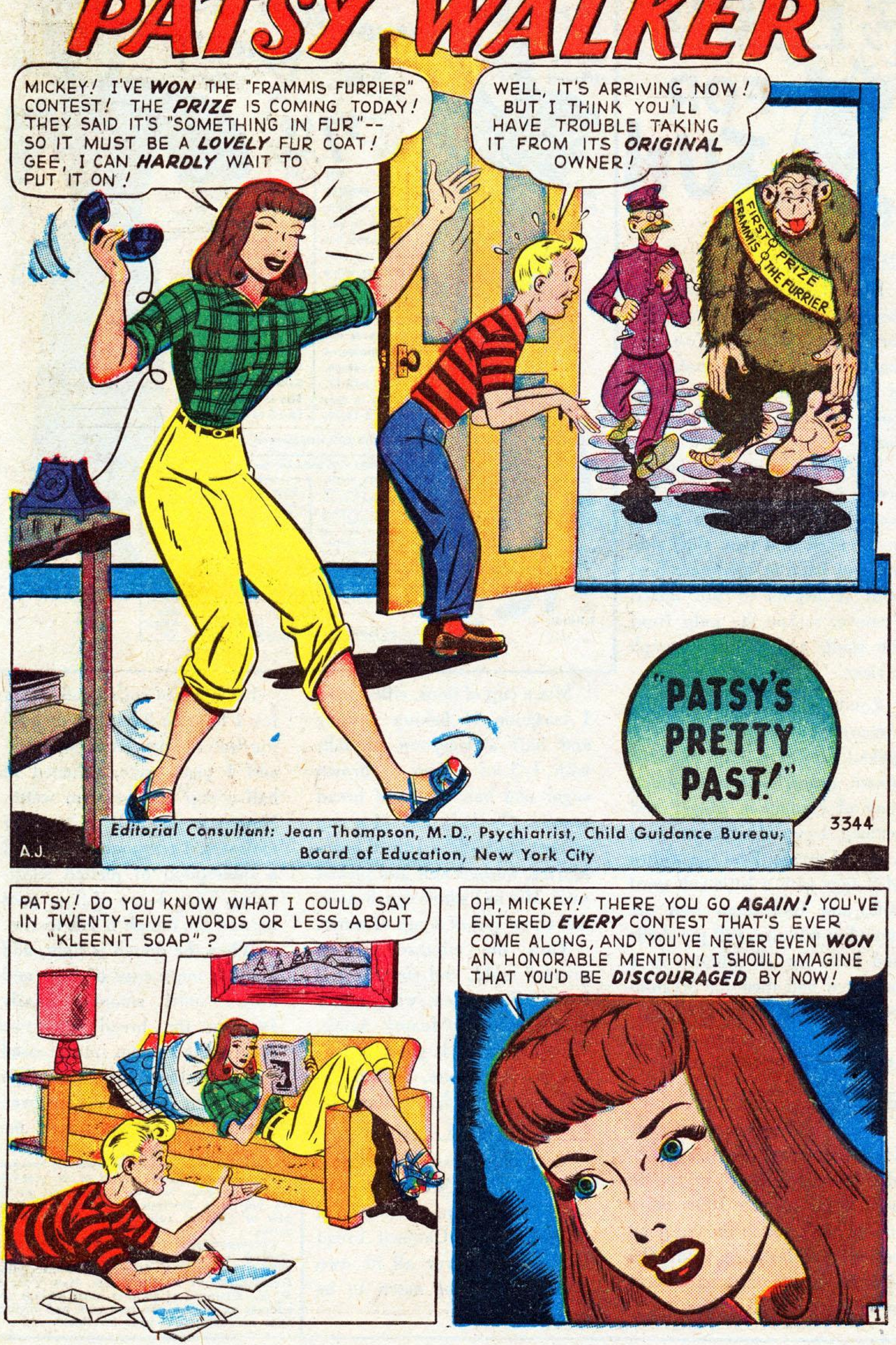
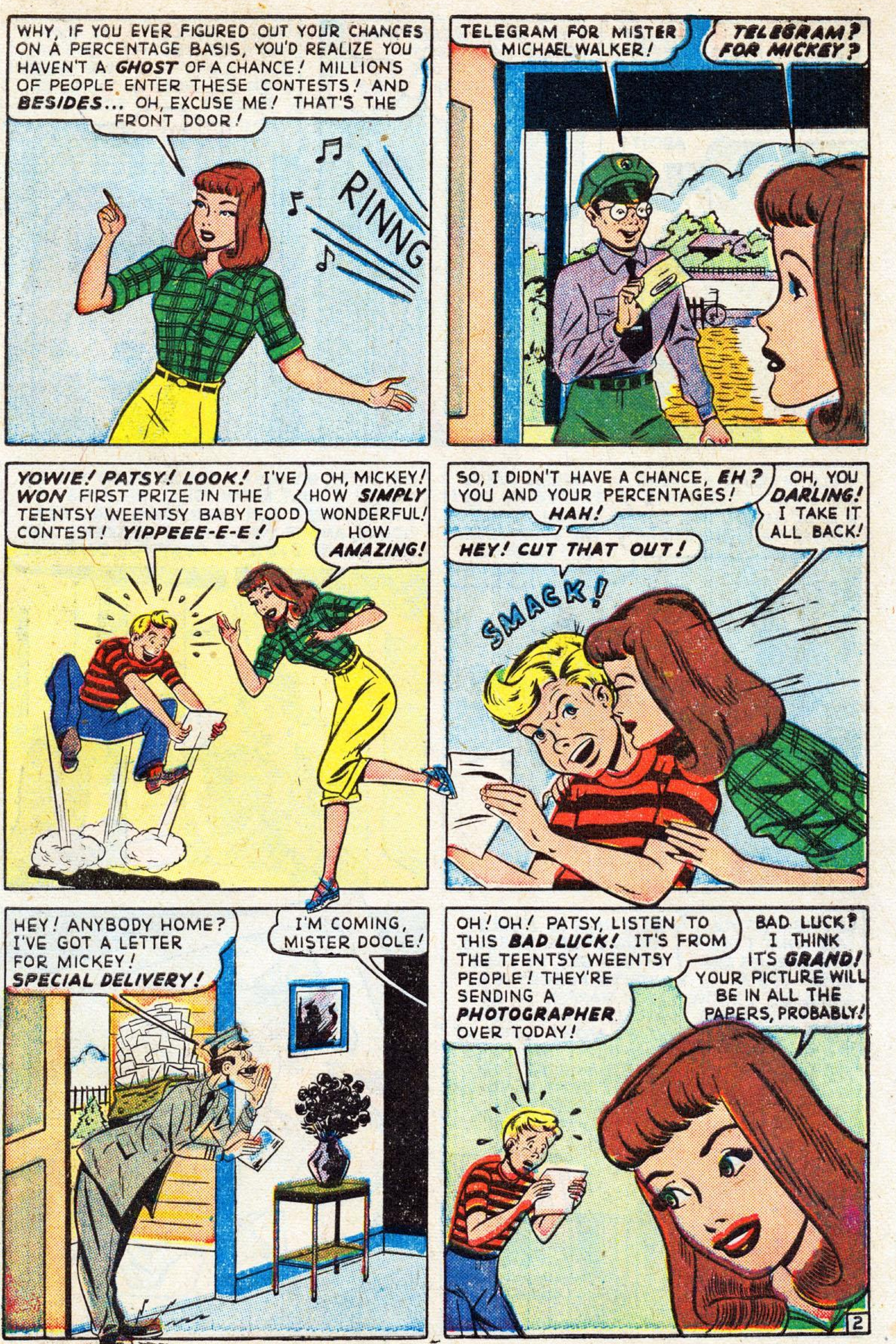
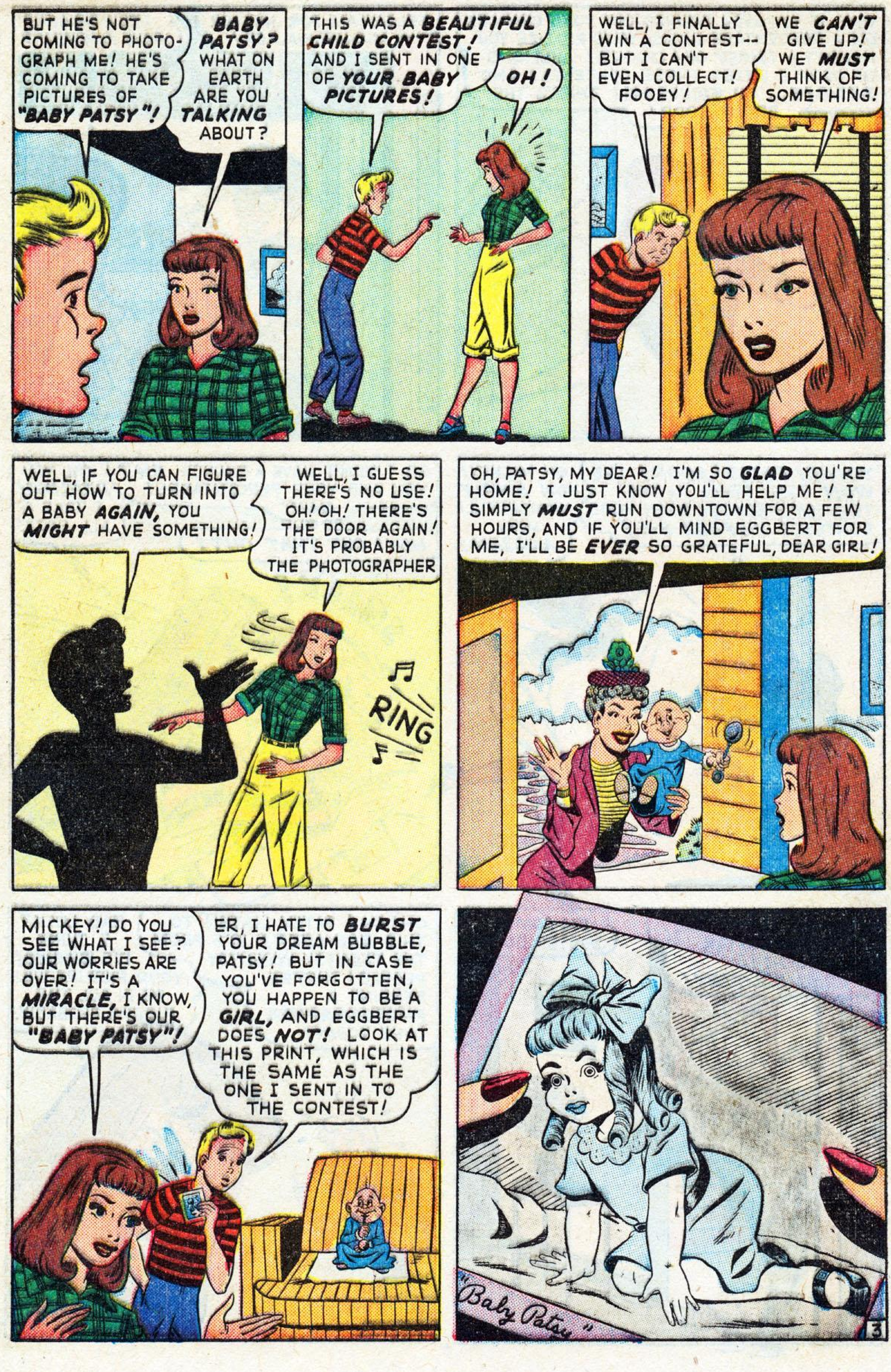
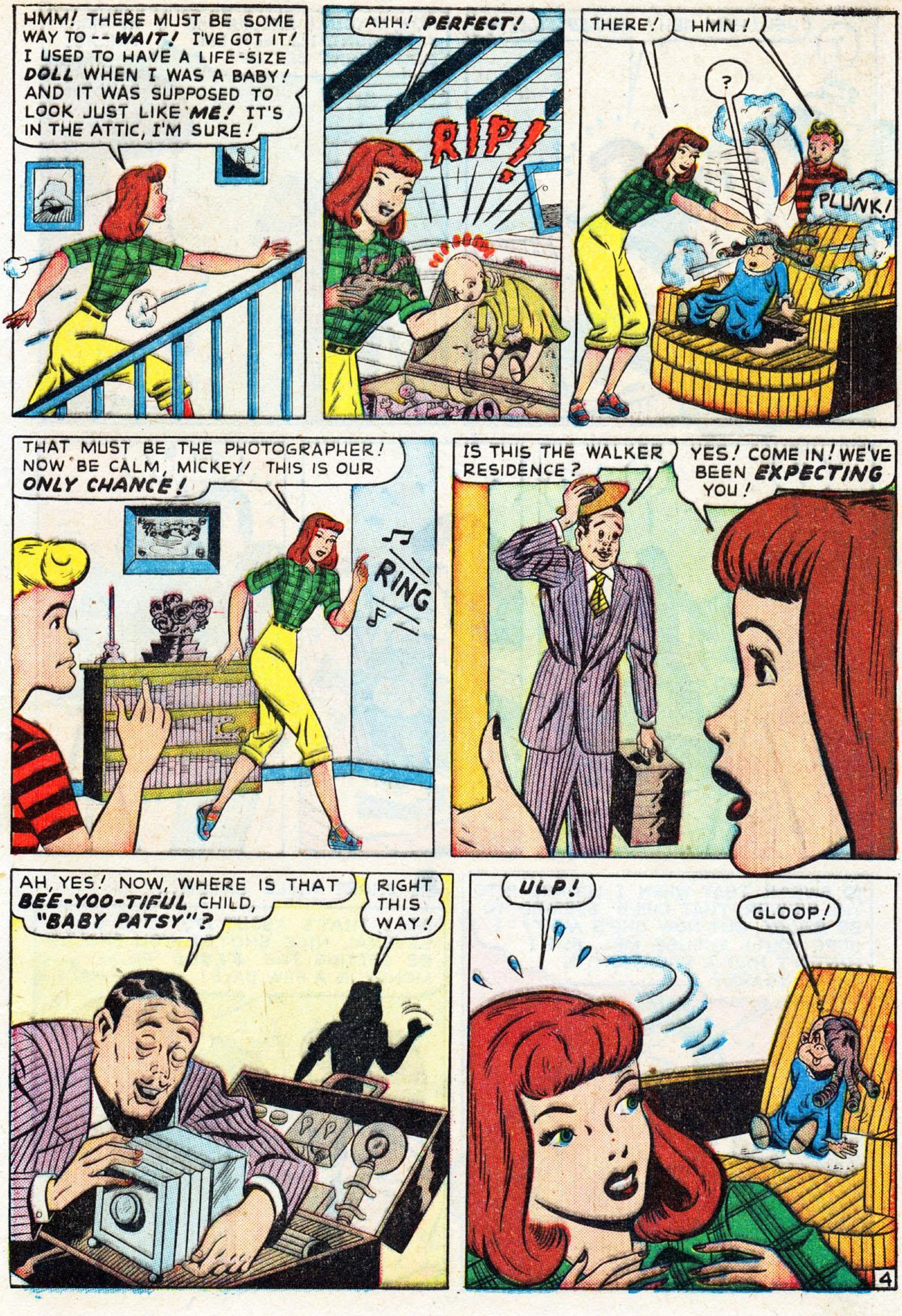
PATSY WALKER

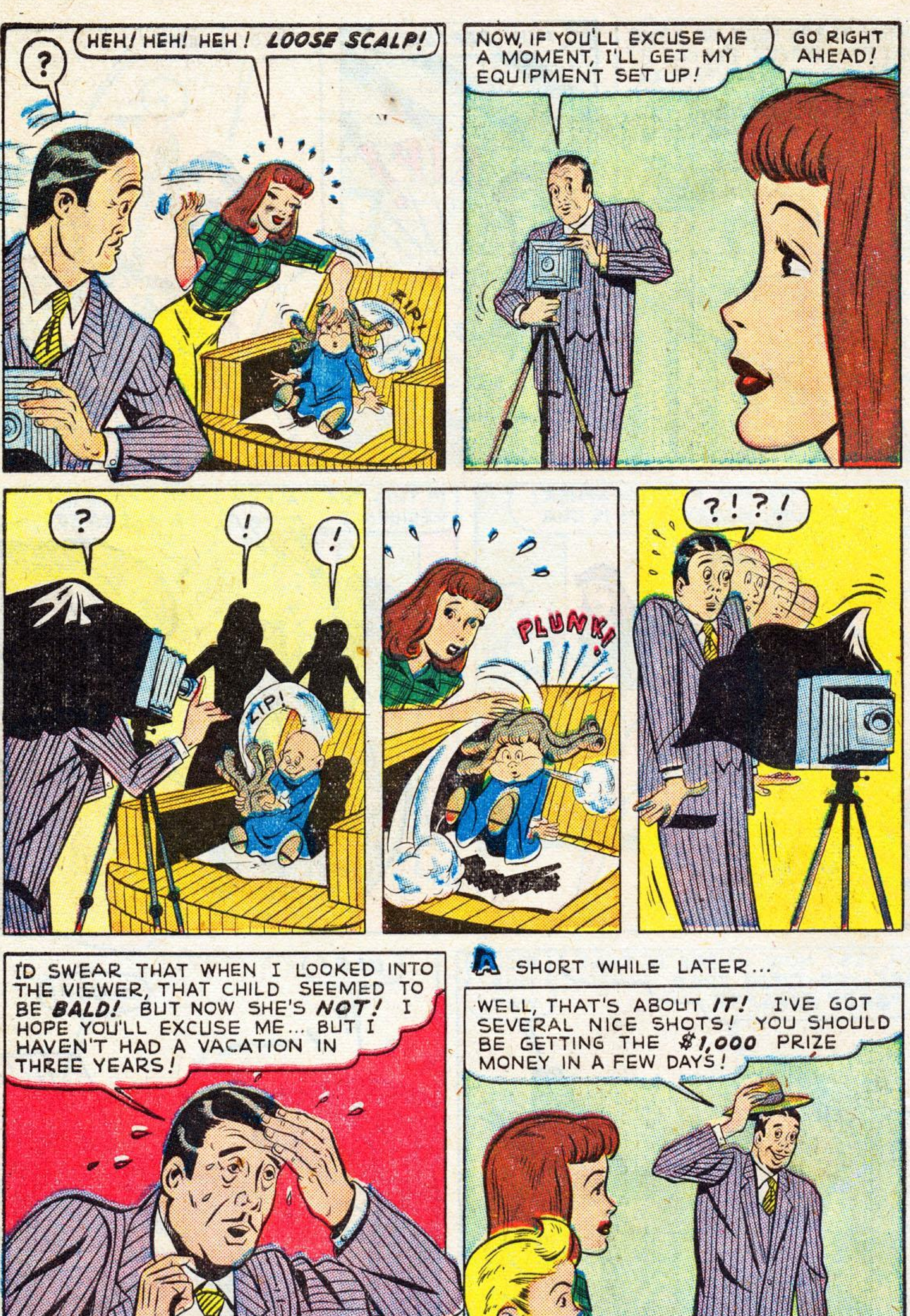

MICKEY! I'VE **WON** THE "FRAMMIS FURRIER" CONTEST! THE **PRIZE** IS COMING TODAY! THEY SAID IT'S "SOMETHING IN FUR"-- SO IT MUST BE A **LOVELY** FUR COAT! GEE, I CAN **HARDLY** WAIT TO PUT IT ON!
WELL, IT'S ARRIVING NOW! BUT I THINK YOU'LL HAVE TROUBLE TAKING IT FROM ITS **ORIGINAL** OWNER!
FIRST PRIZE FRAMMIS THE FURRIER
"PATSY'S PRETTY PAST!"
3344
A.J.
PATSY! DO YOU KNOW WHAT I COULD SAY IN TWENTY-FIVE WORDS OR LESS ABOUT "KLEENIT SOAP"?
OH, MICKEY! THERE YOU GO **AGAIN**! YOU'VE ENTERED **EVERY** CONTEST THAT'S EVER COME ALONG, AND YOU'VE NEVER EVEN **WON** AN HONORABLE MENTION! I SHOULD IMAGINE THAT YOU'D BE **DISCOURAGED** BY NOW!

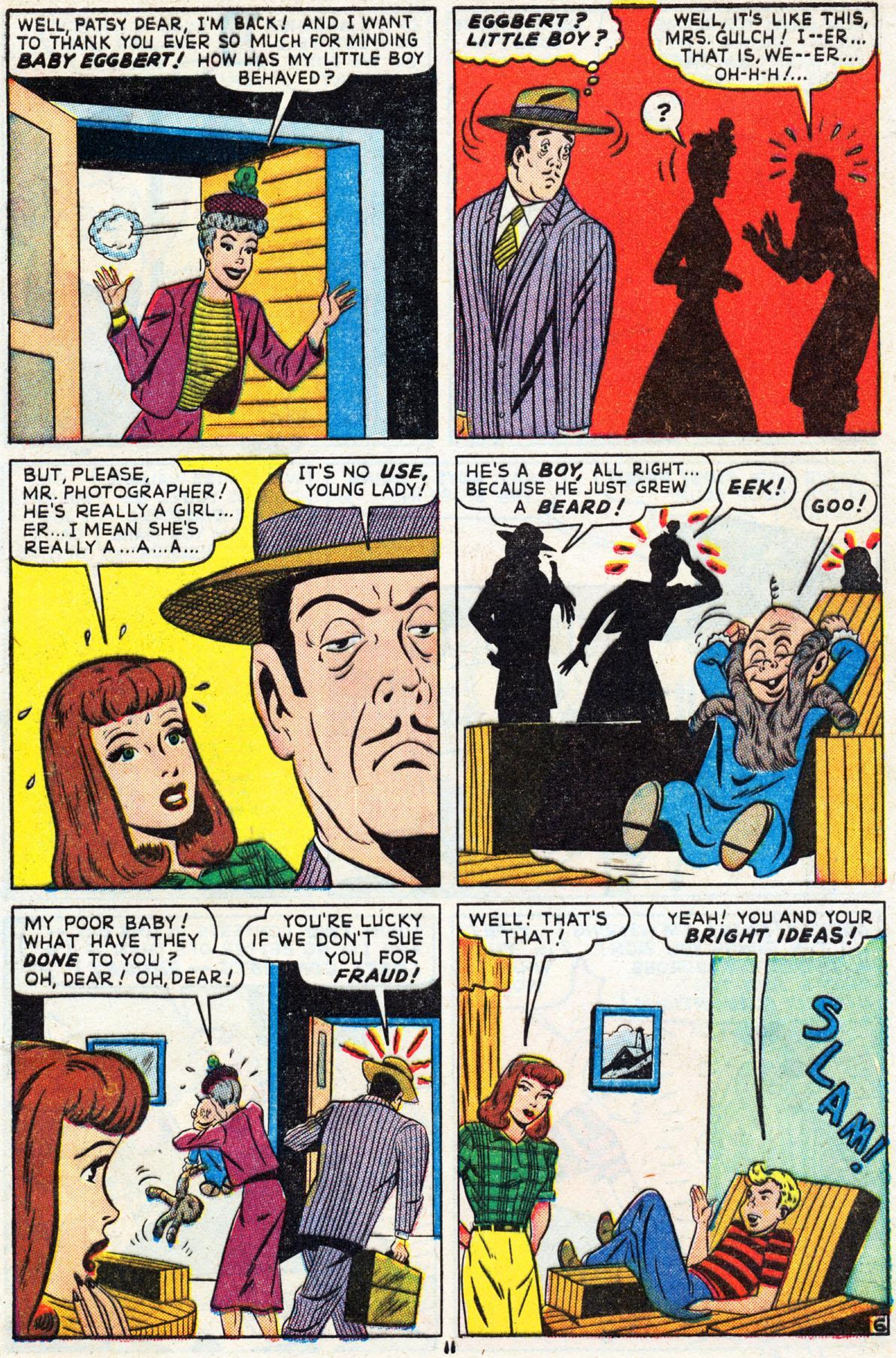
Editorial Consultant: **Jean Thompson, M.D., Psychiatrist, Child Guidance Bureau; Board of Education, New York City**

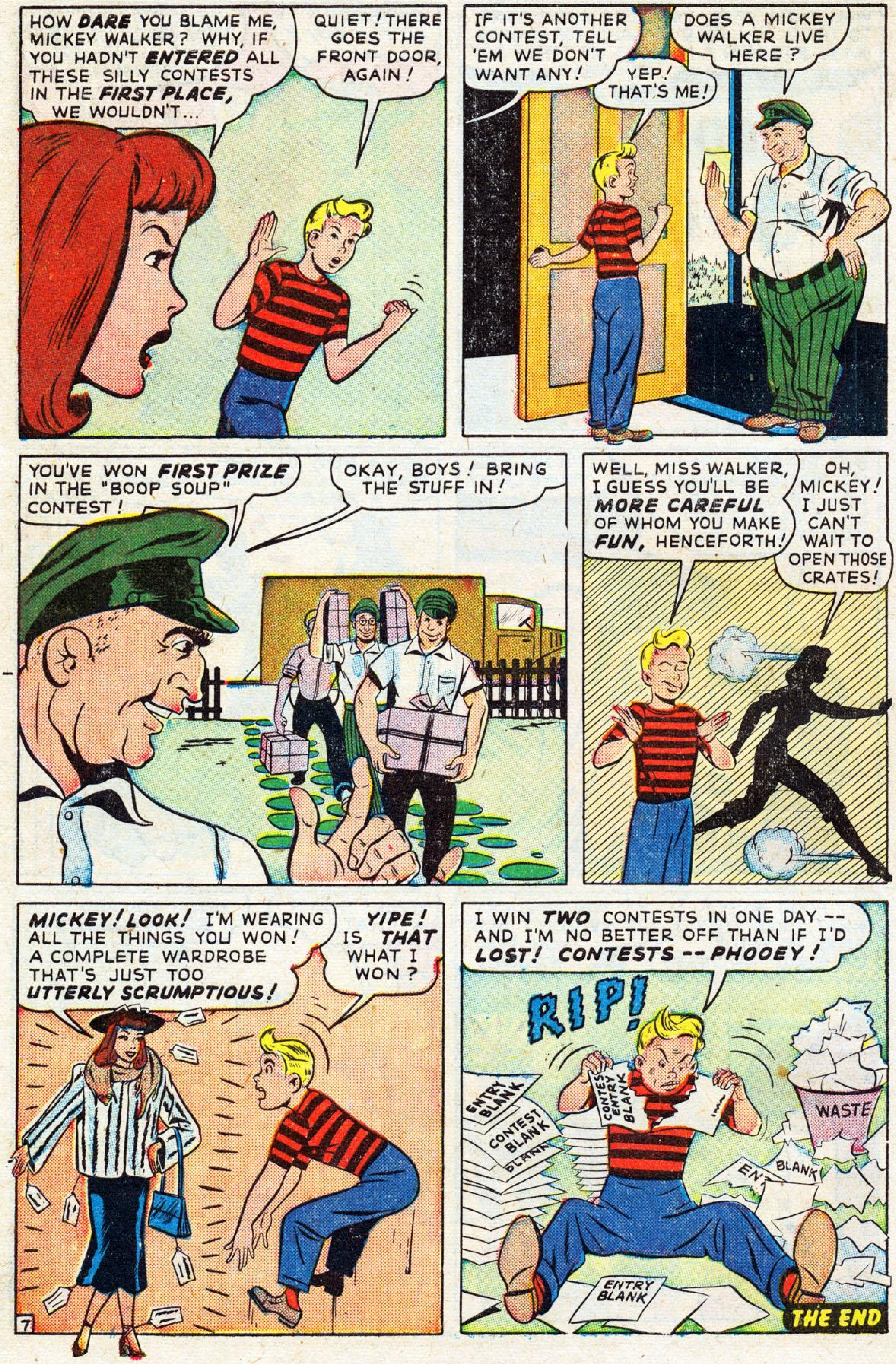

WHY, IF YOU EVER FIGURED OUT YOUR CHANCES ON A PERCENTAGE BASIS, YOU'D REALIZE YOU HAVEN'T A GHOST OF A CHANCE! MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ENTER THESE CONTESTS! AND BESIDES... OH, EXCUSE ME! THAT'S THE FRONT DOOR!
RINNG
TELEGRAM FOR MISTER MICHAEL WALKER!
TELEGRAM? FOR MICKEY?
YOWIE! PATSY! LOOK! I'VE WON FIRST PRIZE IN THE TEENTSY WEENTSY BABY FOOD CONTEST! YIPPEEE-E-E!
OH, MICKEY! HOW SIMPLY WONDERFUL! HOW AMAZING!
SO, I DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE, EH? YOU AND YOUR PERCENTAGES! HAH!
OH, YOU DARLING! I TAKE IT ALL BACK!
HEY! CUT THAT OUT!
SMACK!
HEY! ANYBODY HOME? I'VE GOT A LETTER FOR MICKEY! SPECIAL DELIVERY!
I'M COMING, MISTER DOOLE!
OH! OH! PATSY, LISTEN TO THIS BAD LUCK! IT'S FROM THE TEENTSY WEENTSY PEOPLE! THEY'RE SENDING A PHOTOGRAPHER OVER TODAY!
BAD LUCK? I THINK IT'S GRAND! YOUR PICTURE WILL BE IN ALL THE PAPERS, PROBABLY!


BUT HE'S NOT COMING TO PHOTOGRAPH ME! HE'S COMING TO TAKE PICTURES OF "BABY PATSY"!
BABY PATSY? WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THIS WAS A BEAUTIFUL CHILD CONTEST! AND I SENT IN ONE OF YOUR BABY PICTURES!
OH!
WELL, I FINALLY WIN A CONTEST-- BUT I CAN'T EVEN COLLECT! FOOEY!
WE CAN'T GIVE UP! WE MUST THINK OF SOMETHING!
WELL, IF YOU CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO TURN INTO A BABY AGAIN, YOU MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING!
WELL, I GUESS THERE'S NO USE! OH! OH! THERE'S THE DOOR AGAIN! IT'S PROBABLY THE PHOTOGRAPHER
RING
OH, PATSY, MY DEAR! I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HOME! I JUST KNOW YOU'LL HELP ME! I SIMPLY MUST RUN DOWNTOWN FOR A FEW HOURS, AND IF YOU'LL MIND EGGBERT FOR ME, I'LL BE EVER SO GRATEFUL, DEAR GIRL!
MICKEY! DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE? OUR WORRIES ARE OVER! IT'S A MIRACLE, I KNOW, BUT THERE'S OUR "BABY PATSY"!
ER, I HATE TO BURST YOUR DREAM BUBBLE, PATSY! BUT IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN, YOU HAPPEN TO BE A GIRL, AND EGGBERT DOES NOT! LOOK AT THIS PRINT, WHICH IS THE SAME AS THE ONE I SENT IN TO THE CONTEST!
"Baby Patsy"


HMM! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO -- **WAIT!** I'VE GOT IT! I USED TO HAVE A LIFE-SIZE **DOLL** WHEN I WAS A BABY! AND IT WAS SUPPOSED TO LOOK JUST LIKE **ME!** IT'S IN THE ATTIC, I'M SURE!
AHH! **PERFECT!**
RIP!
THERE!
HMN!
?
PLUNK!
THAT MUST BE THE PHOTOGRAPHER! NOW BE CALM, MICKEY! THIS IS OUR **ONLY CHANCE!**
RING
IS THIS THE WALKER RESIDENCE?
YES! COME IN! WE'VE BEEN **EXPECTING** YOU!
AH, YES! NOW, WHERE IS THAT **BEE-YOO-TIFUL** CHILD, **"BABY PATSY"?**
RIGHT THIS WAY!
ULP!
GLOOP!


?
HEH! HEH! HEH! LOOSE SCALP!
ZIP!
NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME A MOMENT, I'LL GET MY EQUIPMENT SET UP!
GO RIGHT AHEAD!
?
!
!
ZIP!
PLUNK!
?!?!
I'D SWEAR THAT WHEN I LOOKED INTO THE VIEWER, THAT CHILD SEEMED TO BE BALD! BUT NOW SHE'S NOT! I HOPE YOU'LL EXCUSE ME... BUT I HAVEN'T HAD A VACATION IN THREE YEARS!
A SHORT WHILE LATER...
WELL, THAT'S ABOUT IT! I'VE GOT SEVERAL NICE SHOTS! YOU SHOULD BE GETTING THE $1,000 PRIZE MONEY IN A FEW DAYS!


WELL, PATSY DEAR, I'M BACK! AND I WANT TO THANK YOU EVER SO MUCH FOR MINDING ***BABY EGGBERT!*** HOW HAS MY LITTLE BOY BEHAVED?
EGGBERT? LITTLE BOY?
?
WELL, IT'S LIKE THIS, MRS. GULCH! I--ER... THAT IS, WE--ER... OH-H-H!...
BUT, PLEASE, MR. PHOTOGRAPHER! HE'S REALLY A GIRL... ER... I MEAN SHE'S REALLY A... A... A...
IT'S NO ***USE,*** YOUNG LADY!
HE'S A ***BOY,*** ALL RIGHT... BECAUSE HE JUST GREW A ***BEARD!***
EEK!
GOO!
MY POOR BABY! WHAT HAVE THEY ***DONE*** TO YOU? OH, DEAR! OH, DEAR!
YOU'RE LUCKY IF WE DON'T SUE YOU FOR ***FRAUD!***
WELL! THAT'S THAT!
YEAH! YOU AND YOUR ***BRIGHT IDEAS!***
SLAM!
6


HOW **DARE** YOU BLAME ME, MICKEY WALKER? WHY, IF YOU HADN'T **ENTERED** ALL THESE SILLY CONTESTS IN THE **FIRST PLACE,** WE WOULDN'T...
QUIET! THERE GOES THE FRONT DOOR, AGAIN!
IF IT'S ANOTHER CONTEST, TELL 'EM WE DON'T WANT ANY!
DOES A MICKEY WALKER LIVE HERE?
YEP! THAT'S ME!
YOU'VE WON **FIRST PRIZE** IN THE "BOOP SOUP" CONTEST!
OKAY, BOYS! BRING THE STUFF IN!
WELL, MISS WALKER, I GUESS YOU'LL BE **MORE CAREFUL** OF WHOM YOU MAKE **FUN,** HENCEFORTH!
OH, MICKEY! I JUST CAN'T WAIT TO OPEN THOSE CRATES!
MICKEY! LOOK! I'M WEARING ALL THE THINGS YOU WON! A COMPLETE WARDROBE THAT'S JUST TOO **UTTERLY SCRUMPTIOUS!**
YIPE! IS **THAT** WHAT I WON?
I WIN **TWO** CONTESTS IN ONE DAY -- AND I'M NO BETTER OFF THAN IF I'D **LOST! CONTESTS -- PHOOEY!**
RIP!
ENTRY BLANK
CONTEST BLANK
BLANK
CONTEST ENTRY BLANK
WASTE
ENT
BLANK
ENTRY BLANK
THE END

FOOD FOR FUN

SWEET SOMETHINGS . . .

Whether you need something special for that party you've been planning for weeks or just a sweet dish for the family's dessert, this orange icebox cake will fill the bill.

Mix half a cup of sugar with a tablespoon of cornstarch and add 3 lightly beaten egg yolks, a cupful of orange juice and a tablespoon of butter. Cook this mixture in the top of a double boiler until thickened.

Remove it from the stove, add the grated rind of 1 orange, cool, and add the beaten egg whites. Line the bottom and the sides of a round mold with split ladyfingers, the rounded sides on the outside of the mold.

Spread a layer of the filling mixture over the ladyfingers, then another layer of ladyfingers, more filling and so on until all is used. Chill in icebox for 24 hours, then turn out on platter and garnish with whipped cream.

You'll be hearing plenty of "sweet nothings" the day you serve this!

SPANISH SURPRISE . . .

Want to do something a bit different with rice and, incidentally, have a tasty, filling dish for a meatless meal? Then Spanish rice is your answer! Here's how:

Wash 1 cup of rice under cold water until the water runs clear. Melt 4 tablespoons of fat (butter, margarine or bacon fat —or a smaller amount of chicken fat if you have some on hand) and add to it 2 finely chopped onions and, if you like it, a minced clove of garlic. Stir in the rice and cook all together for 10 minutes, stirring lightly with a fork.

Add a chopped green pepper, a few stuffed green olives, sliced, and half a cup of tomato paste mixed with a little boiling water. Season with salt and pepper and cook five minutes more, stirring constantly.

Add about 2 cups of boiling water and cook slowly for one hour. You may need to add more boiling water during that time if the rice tends to become dry.

P.S.: It's wonderful as a stuffing for green peppers, too.

BROCCOLI BRUNCH . . .

Tired of eating broccoli just plain with butter? Weary of making Hollandaise sauce for it? Try it as broccoli au gratin to give an old dish a "new look"!

Peel the woody stems of a bunch of broccoli and steam it, flowerets up, in boiling salted water until tender. Drain. Separate stems and flowerets carefully and lay them neatly in a buttered baking dish.

Make a sauce of 3 tablespoons butter, 3 tablespoons flour, 1½ cups milk, salt and pepper. A little cayenne is a help. When the sauce has thickened, add ¼ cup of grated cheese.

When the cheese has melted and the sauce is smooth, pour it over the broccoli in the baking dish. Top with bread crumbs and dot with butter. Bake in a moderate oven until the crumbs are a golden brown.

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SHE MADE HIM A HERO!

By JEAN ATKINS

A HEN session is the next best thing to a swoon date—or so Babs had always thought. Now she wondered. Leaning languidly against a pillar on Letty's front porch, she listened to the chatter of her girl friends, and the longer she listened, the less happy she felt.

The trouble, of course, was Wilmer!

The conversation had drifted to the subject of boy friends. A bad subject, from Babs' point of view, because she couldn't help feeling just a trifle self-conscious about Wilmer. It wasn't that he wasn't as good as anyone else's boy friend; it was just that Wilmer was different! He couldn't be judged by ordinary standards. But how to explain that to the girls?

Letty and Betty rattled on about their respective lights of love. “And now Tom is spending two hours a day on a set of exercises—to get in shape for football, you know.” Letty's eyes gleamed with pride at being the steady date of Tom Yates, the football captain at Kinley High.

Betty sniffed. “Russ doesn't have to get in shape, of course,” she remarked. “He always is.” Which was true. Russ Benton was junior lifeguard at the beach during the summer and during the basketball season was nothing less than the highest scoring forward in the league.

Babs listened, and sighed. She wished she could make some nonchalant remark about the achievements of Wilmer, but somehow, when it came to Wilmer, there wasn't much to say. He was one of the nicest kids in the world, of course, and Babs knew she could always rely on him. And he never failed to do his best, but his best was unfailingly a failure. A spindle-legged, overeager seventeen, Wilmer was one of those boys who just haven't found themselves yet. If only . . . Babs was jerked out of her thoughts by Letty's tap on her elbow.

“Dreaming again, huh? Not about glamor boy Wilmer, by any chance?”

Betty cut in with a snicker, “What is Wilmer going out for this year, collecting bugs or reading through an encyclopedia?” Letty and Betty looked at each other and giggled.

Babs jumped to her feet, indignant. “I'll have you know Wilmer is one of the finest boys in Riverdale,” she snapped, “and one of the most capable, too! You just wait—he'll show you!” And she whirled around and stamped angrily out of the Saturday afternoon hen sesh.

. . . At seven that evening there was a thunderous clatter on Babs' porch as Wilmer tripped on the steps. Babs opened the door and surveyed him with a controlled disgust.

“Right on time, huh?” Wilmer grinned, collecting his lanky legs.

“But must you always try to knock the house down to announce your arrival?” Babs sighed. “We *do* have a doorbell, you know.”

Wilmer straightened his tie and laughed apologetically. “Ready to go to the movies?” he asked, feeling the subject should be changed.

PERHAPS IT'S BETTER TO LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE, BUT BABS FORGOT TO CONSIDER THIS POINT UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE. OR WAS IT?

Wilmer flew over the wall in a nice, geometric arc, landing in a clump of foliage.

“Wilmer, we’re not going anywhere,” Babs’ voice was firm, “until I’ve had a talk with you.”

Wilmer looked puzzled, then shrugged and collapsed awkwardly on a step. “Gee, Babs, just because my feet get in my way once in a . . .”

Babs gestured impatiently. “Never mind that. Wilmer,” she looked at him speculatively, “I’ve been thinking. How would you like to be a hero?”

“Huh?” Wilmer gaped.

“Tomorrow,” Babs continued in the same firm tone, “you’re going to enter yourself in the County Swimming Meet. Moreover, you’re going to win!”

Wilmer was stunned. “But I can hardly swim at all!”

“You can practice. If Tom Yates can be a football captain and Russ Benton a basketball star, you can be a swimming champion. Either that,” Babs held up an imperious finger, “or we’re through!”

Wilmer shook his head dazedly.

. . . But every day during the next two weeks he doggedly practiced swimming strokes at the local beach. Each evening he reported his progress to Babs, along with a pessimistic comment on his abilities, but Babs wasn’t discouraged.

“Wilmer, all it takes is confidence,” she insisted. “Look at Tom Yates or Russ Benton. What do they have that you haven’t got?”

“Muscles,” Wilmer responded simply.

Babs sighed; Wilmer was right. Nevertheless, there had to be something at which he could excel, and Babs had made up her mind he’d try everything. Some day he’d win, and then Babs could boast a little, too.

“Wilmer,” she exhorted, “you. too, can be a champion—and you’re going to be!”

Wilmer shook his head dubiously. “Did you hear that Biff Williams is entered in that swimming meet?”

For a moment Babs was rocked. Biff Williams—the best all-round athlete in Riverdale. whose hobby was collecting cups and medals! But then, setting her jaw grimly, Babs shrugged.

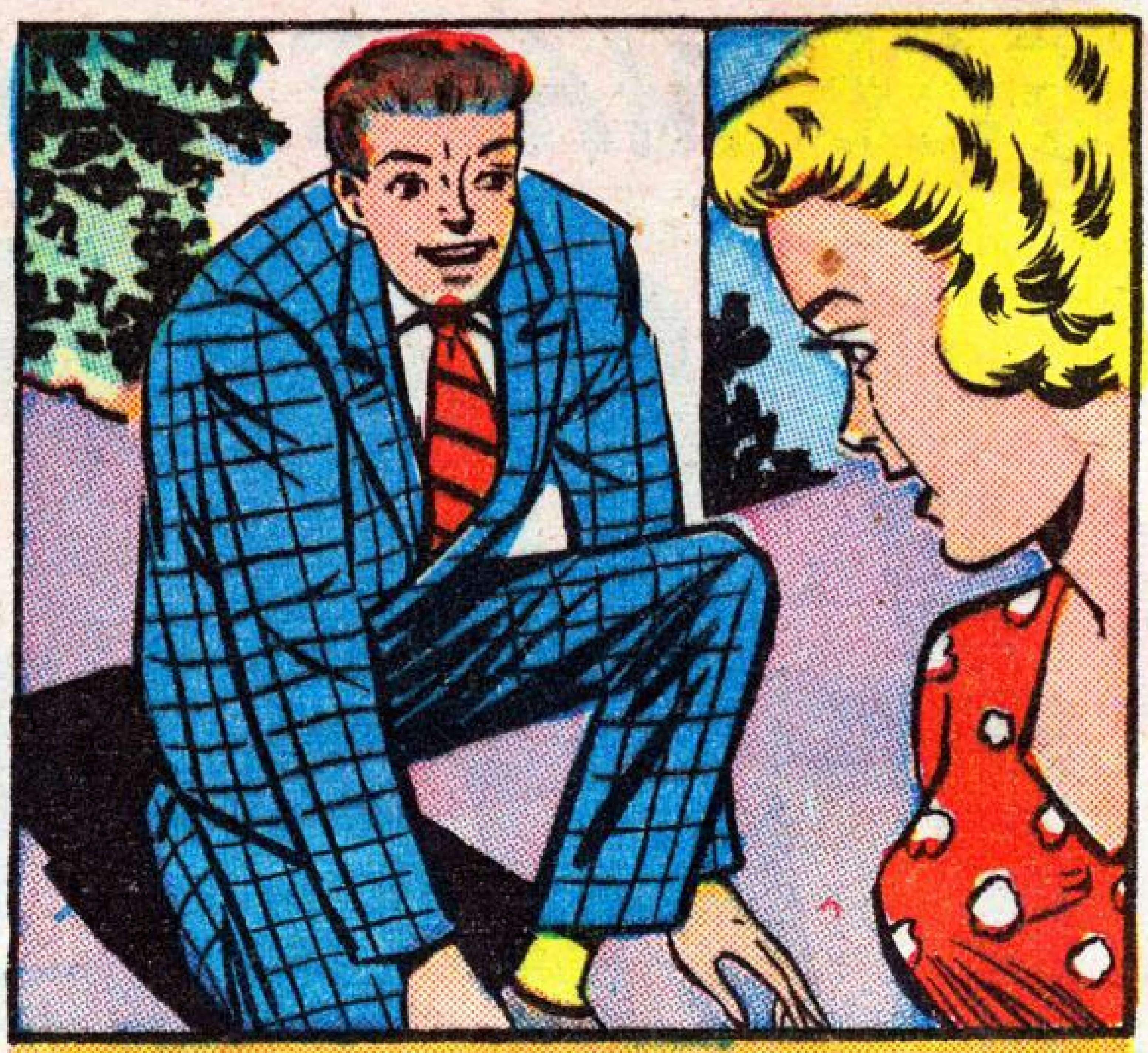
“Don’t give it a thought,” she instructed. “Just go out and beat him.”

Wilmer nodded. “ ‘Just go out and beat him’!” he repeated. He went away chuckling, but it sounded more like the croaking of a frog.

Each day thereafter, Wilmer’s expression grew a shade more dubious. Finally. the day of the meet arrived. and as Wilmer assembled with the other contestants at the edge of the Country Club pool. he looked like the shadow of an inferiority complex.

Crossing her fingers. Babs shouted. “You can do it, Wilmer!” Wilmer looked up pathetically and tried to grin. Just then the gun went off. The swimmers dived into the pool in graceful unison—all but Wilmer. that is. He was so startled he fell in!

Horror-stricken. Babs looked away. straight into the eyes of Letty and Betty. Their grins of mockery were even more galling than Wilmer’s exhibition so Babs returned her gaze. unhappily, to the pool.



“Right on time, huh?” Wilmer grinned, collecting his lanky legs.

Wilmer was flailing frantically through the water at a rattling rate of speed. but he was crossing from side to side rather than lengthwise! Reaching the edge, he clambered triumphantly out of the pool, shook the water from his eyes, and lifted both hands above his head in a victory signal. A roaring wave of laughter informed him of his ludicrous position, and a desperate, trapped look began to ooze through the line of his smile.

Babs didn’t dare raise her eyes to meet the derisive grins of Letty and Betty so she kept them fixed on Wilmer in fascinated unbelief.

It seemed for a moment as if Wilmer were going to jump back into the pool. He looked longingly at the green depths of the water, then reconsidered and trotted to the exit at the far end of the pool, accompanied by a hail of hooting and catcalls.

Biff Williams won the race easily, but Babs didn’t notice. With a flushed face and glazed eyes. she left the pool and waited for Wilmer on the terrace outside.

Hours seemed to pass before he appeared When he finally did show up, however, looking meek and humble as a chastised puppy. she didn’t have the heart to say any more than “Wilmer!”

Wilmer tried to squeeze out a grin. “I guess the water got in my eyes,” he muttered. “Couldn’t see where I was going.”

“Never mind.” Babs found herself saying, “next time it will be different.”

“Next time!” Wilmer looked not only suspicious, but terrified.

Babs smiled her most intriguing smile. “Apparently you’re not a swimmer,” she reasoned gently “Does that mean you couldn’t be a tennis champion?”

Wilmer groaned. “I absolutely refuse!”

Babs chuckled. Her laugh was sweet, but it spoke volumes in determination.

. . . During the next week Wilmer was to be seen at the park tennis courts. “making like an athlete,” as he expressed it. That, of course. was a gross overstatement. He bounded about the court with a maximum of energy and a minimum of direction. arrived. always at the right spot at the wrong time, and played the type of game in which the net appears to be twenty feet high. When he wasn't plucking the ball out of the net, he was retrieving it from another court. Babs sat silently on a bench, coaching him between shudders, and growing more and more discouragd. But she didn't stop hoping. "After all," she philosophized, "miracles *can* happen!"

Wilmer didn't seem to take kindly to this viewpoint. In fact, it upset him greatly. "I haven't won a game in twenty practice sets," he pointed out bitterly, "so how could I possibly enter a tournament?"

Babs was inflexible. "Wilmer, I have the utmost confidence in you," she reiterated for the twentieth time. "According to the laws of average, you'll have to win a set sometime. Maybe that will happen during the tournament."

Wilmer looked reproachful, but he obediently kept slamming the ball into the net.

Two days before the tournament Biff Williams appeared on the courts. Babs groaned. Was he going to be in the tournament, too? Watching him sharpen his game, a power game in which the ball bit at the base lines like a rifle shot, Babs almost resigned herself to Wilmer's defeat. But a wan flame of hope kept burning. It took a lot to discourage Babs.

Finishing his practice, Biff strolled over to the bench. "Mind?" he said, sitting down beside her.

Together they watched Wilmer's struggles on the next court.

"Is *he*," Biff's voice was incredulous, "entering the tournament?"

Babs bristled. "He certainly is!"

The tall, powerful boy beside her laughed loud and long. "Poor Wilmer," he said briefly.

"He may surprise you," Babs' voice was acid.

"He'll surprise me if he gets through the first round." Biff turned interested eyes on Babs. "Can't understand what you see in that drip anyway. You know," he lowered his voice confidentially, "I'd ask you for a date myself if you weren't always out with him."

Babs was searching for the exact word to express her deep and abiding lack of interest in any dates Biff might proffer when she noticed Wilmer was watching them closely. An idea occurred to Babs. If she could make Wilmer just a bit jealous of Biff, it might help his fighting spirit a lot.

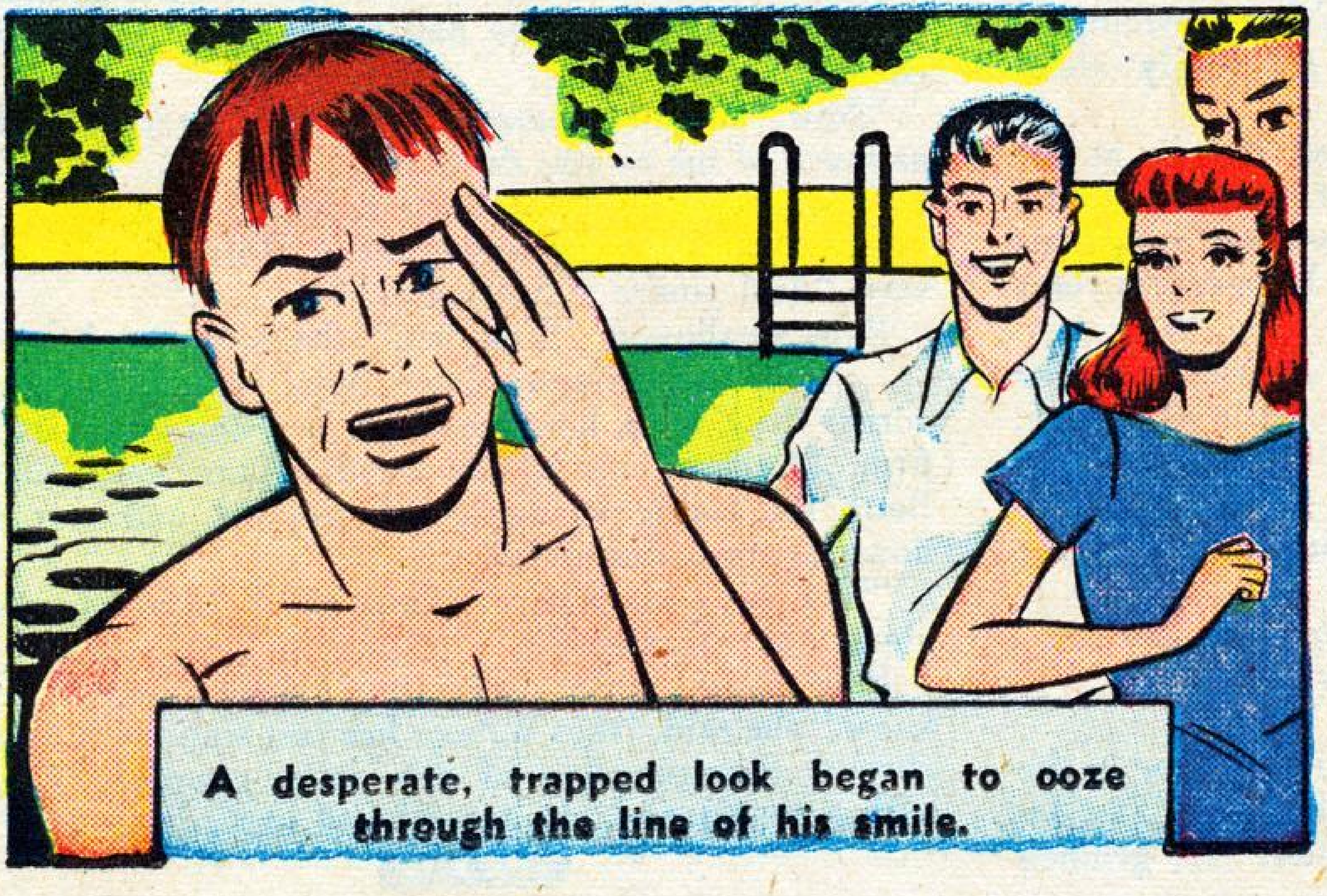
Turning to Biff, she smiled sweetly, invitingly. "I might take you up on that sometime."

"Do that." Biff glanced at his watch. "Have to go now. Get in a little bowling." Getting up to leave, he added, chuckling, "Tell Wilmer not to overwork. It's a waste of energy."

Babs sizzled as she watched him stroll nonchalantly away. The insufferable egotist! She'd prefer Wilmer over twenty Biffs! Still sizzling, she became suddenly aware that Wilmer was standing before her, gazing down quizzically.

"What did Biff want?" he demanded.

"Oh," Babs became elaborately casual, "he asked me for a date."



A desperate, trapped look began to ooze through the line of his smile.

"And?"

"I said I'd think about it."

"Hmph!" Wilmer grunted. Walking home that evening, he was a picture of silent dejection.

. . . On the day of the tournament Babs took her place in the stands and crossed her fingers again. For a moment it looked as though she might have been right this time, too. Wilmer appeared on the court, too shy even to raise his eyes to the stands, and jiggled gawkily as he waited for the contest to begin. Biff Williams, the opponent he had inevitably drawn, sent the first serve across the net like a bazooka shell, straight at Wilmer, who blindly raised his racket to protect his head. By some quirk the ball struck the racket, dribbled back across the net and into the alley, and Wilmer had taken the first point!

The spectators went wild, and Babs opened her eyes wide. "Hurray, Wilmer!" she screamed.

That was her only chance to applaud. From then on, Biff's serves were unmanageable. The few times Wilmer reached them he drove the ball back into the net. Most of the time he swung and missed completely. It was a slaughter, and Wilmer was the perfect sacrificial lamb.

Babs had to look under the stands to find Wilmer when the massacre was over. Seeing her, the ex-tennis player backed away fearfully, holding up both hands. "No more ideas!" he insisted. "I'm simply not cut out to be a champion, and I'm not going to make a fool of myself again!"

"Wilmer!"

That was all Babs said just then. Three days later Wilmer found himself entered in the Middledale Bicycle Race. His protests only drew from Babs the hopeful comment that "anybody can ride a bicycle!"

"Before I say yes, is Biff going to be in the race?" Wilmer asked cautiously.

Babs had a horrible presentment, but she tried to ignore it. "I don't think so," she encouraged.

Biff was.

On the appointed day he appeared in the starting line-up next to Wilmer, crouched on a high racing bike, on his face the usual

"Well, here he is, the answer to a maiden's prayer!" Biff patted himself on the shoulder.

smug, confident grin. Babs' fingers were tired of being crossed by now, but she was still hopeful. After all, what was there to riding a bicycle?

Wilmer started strongly, his skinny legs pumping like pistons, drawing out in front of the pack, neck and neck with Biff. Babs' eyes were beginning to light up—this time Wilmer would give Biff a contest!—when something happened. A stone wall appeared alongside the two leaders, and Babs later had a suspicion that Biff crowded Wilmer toward it. Anyway, there was a crash, and Wilmer flew over the wall in a nice, geometric arc, landing in a clump of foliage. Biff pedaled nonchalantly on, winning easily.

A quarter of an hour later Wilmer woke from his stupor to find Babs bending over him with a repentant tear in her eyes. "Never again, Wilmer," she promised sorrowfully. "I'll never ask you to enter another contest. You were right, you're not championship material, you're—just Wilmer!"

Wilmer blinked his eyes for a moment as he thought this over. Then, amazingly, he was angry! "Is that so?" he growled. "'Just Wilmer,' huh?" Gingerly he picked his skinny frame off the ground and limped away in high dudgeon.

. . . Babs didn't see much of Wilmer the next few days. He avoided her company, seemingly had dropped out of all community life, while Babs occupied herself with bitter reproaches.

"If only I hadn't interfered!" she moaned. "Wilmer was happy in his little rut, but I had to try and change all that. Now," the thought was so horrible Babs' mind slowed to a stop, "now perhaps I'll never see him again. He's probably through with me for life!"

The emotion that ripped at Babs' heart astonished her. She hadn't known she felt so deeply about Wilmer.

"Serves you right!" she frowned sternly at the image in her dressing table mirror. But that didn't stop the slow, sick tide of emotion that swept her as she contemplated the presumably Wilmer-less years ahead.

But several evenings after the bicycle race the front bell pealed. With a sudden catch of breath, Babs raced to the door

"Oh."

It was Biff, smug, cocky, grinning Biff. Looking at him. Babs felt cheated.

"Well. here he is, the answer to a maiden's prayer!" Biff patted himself on the shoulder

"Ugh," Babs managed.

"Since word has gone out that you are now in the market for a swoon king," Biff rattled on, "I've decided to take care of that little matter." He grinned confidently. "About time you got rid of that shrimp, Wilmer!"

Babs gasped, reaching for words.

"Now, come on, chick, grab your hat or whatever, and we'll be off!"

As Biff's hand touched her elbow, words came to Babs, a scalding torrent of words that broke on the unprepared Biff like a thunderstorm. He staggered back blindly, stupidly, and Babs pressed the attack. "Furthermore," she snapped, "I did not get rid of Wilmer, and even if I had, you'd be the last person in the world to take his place, you—you—you medal collector!"

A moment later a routed Biff was scurrying down the street, his ears humming, his mind stunned by the first defeat he'd ever suffered.

. . . It was three days later that Babs heard Wilmer's unmistakable clatter on the porch. "Wilmer," she cried. rushing out, "where have you been keeping yourself?"

"I'll tell you later," he replied, and his smile was unapologetic. In fact, it radiated confidence. "Tomorrow," he spoke impressively, "I'm leaving for Jonesville. When I return," he threw his chest out proudly, "I'll be a hero, like Biff!"

Babs was stunned. She demanded details, but Wilmer would say no more. "Just wait," he kept repeating.

Wonderingly, Babs waited. Wilmer a hero? It couldn't be. After all, he had proved himself incapable of even riding a bicycle. But once more Babs began to hope. For three days she waited and hoped. Then there came that clatter on the front porch.

It was a new Wilmer that Babs found when she opened the door. A victorious, serenely confident Wilmer, a young man who had found himself!

"You did it!" Babs gasped.

Wilmer nodded in calm, happy affirmation.

"But what did you do?"

Wilmer sat down and told her all. He recounted the trials, the tribulations, the nerve wracking tensions, described in glowing detail his final, climactic burst to triumph. As Babs listened, she felt she was dreaming. All the things she'd hoped for Wilmer had come true—not exactly in the way she'd planned, but nevertheless Wilmer had triumphed! He was a champion!

"Now," Wilmer demanded mildly, "do you think as much of me as you do of Biff?"

"Oh, Wilmer!" Tears came to Babs' eyes.

There was no need to say more. Wilmer did anyway. "And you're still my girl?"

Babs swallowed. "You bet," she said simply.

. . . Fifteen minutes later Babs sailed into the corner drug store, her head high, her step proud and firm. Marching up to the booth where Letty and Betty sat eating sundaes, she stopped and stared down at them disdainfully.

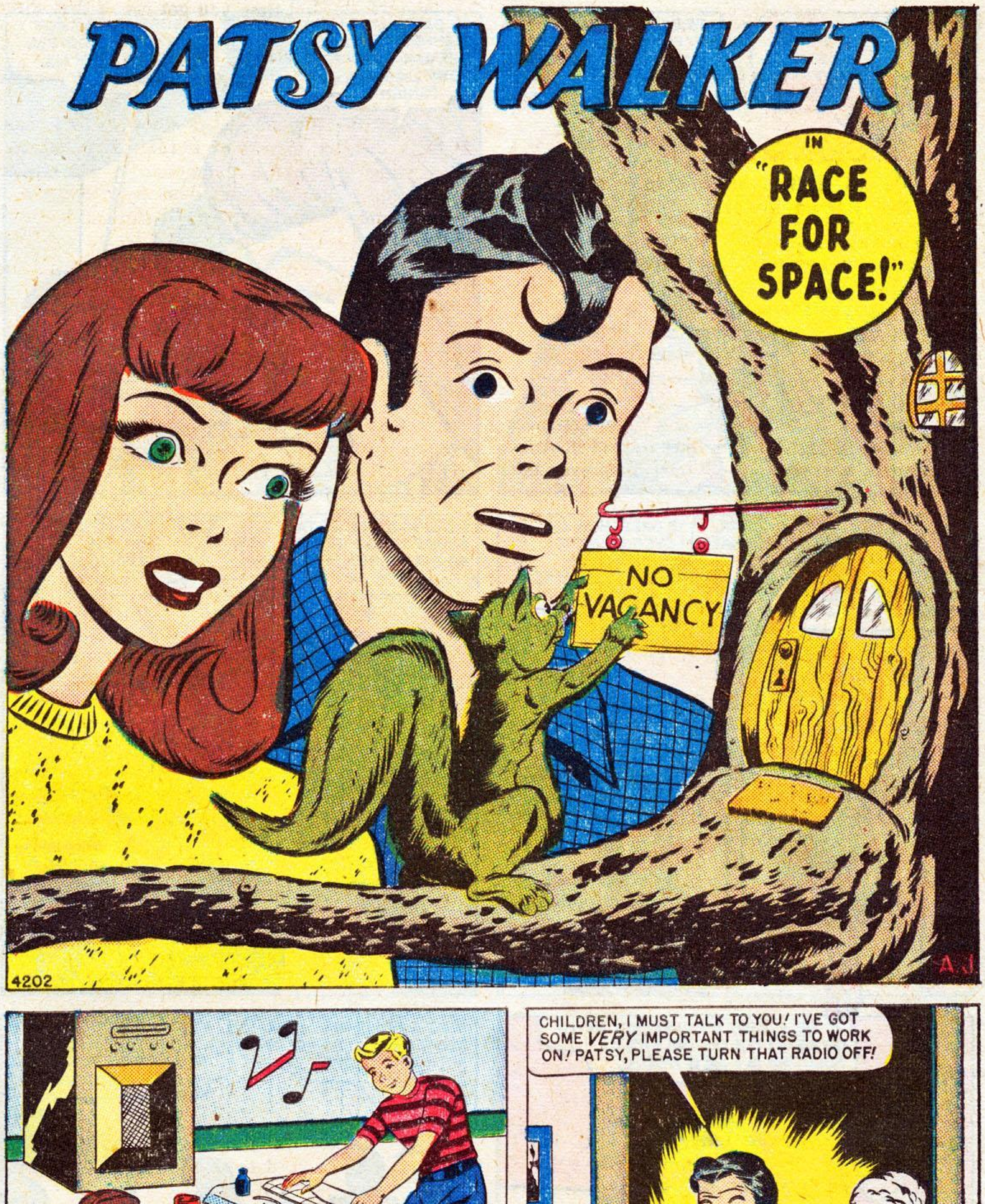
"Well, look who's here!" Letty cried. "And where's glamor boy Wilmer?"

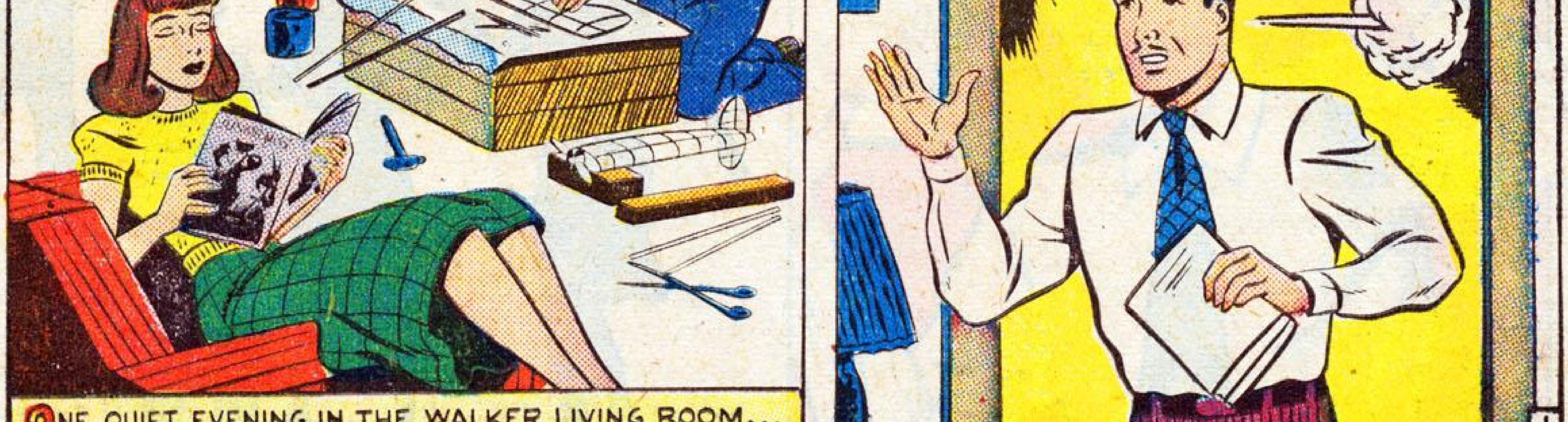
Babs spoke slowly, distinctly. "I want you girls to know," she said, "that Wilmer has just won the junior checker championship of this entire county!" And with a casual nod, she turned and walked away.

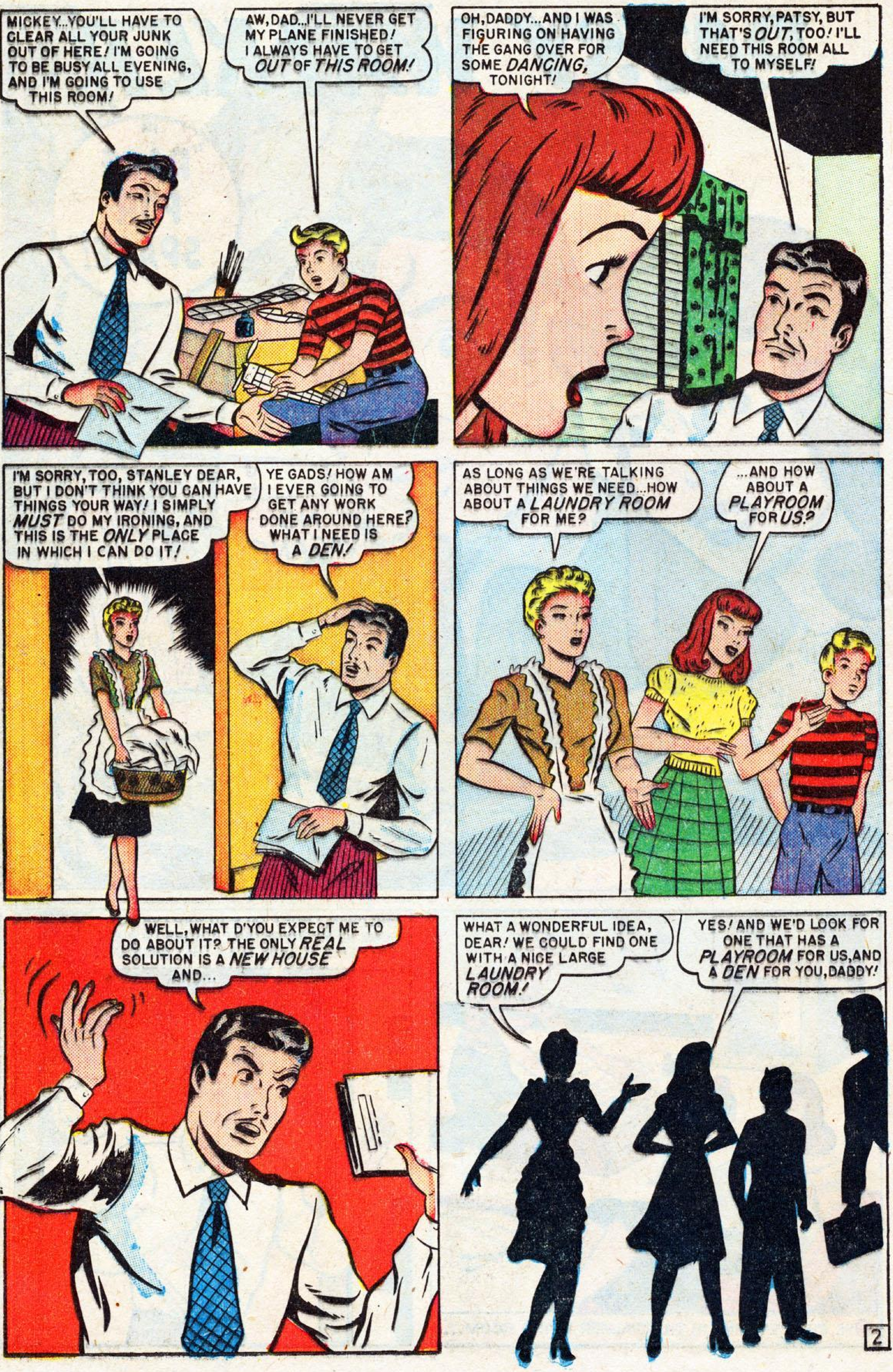
THE END

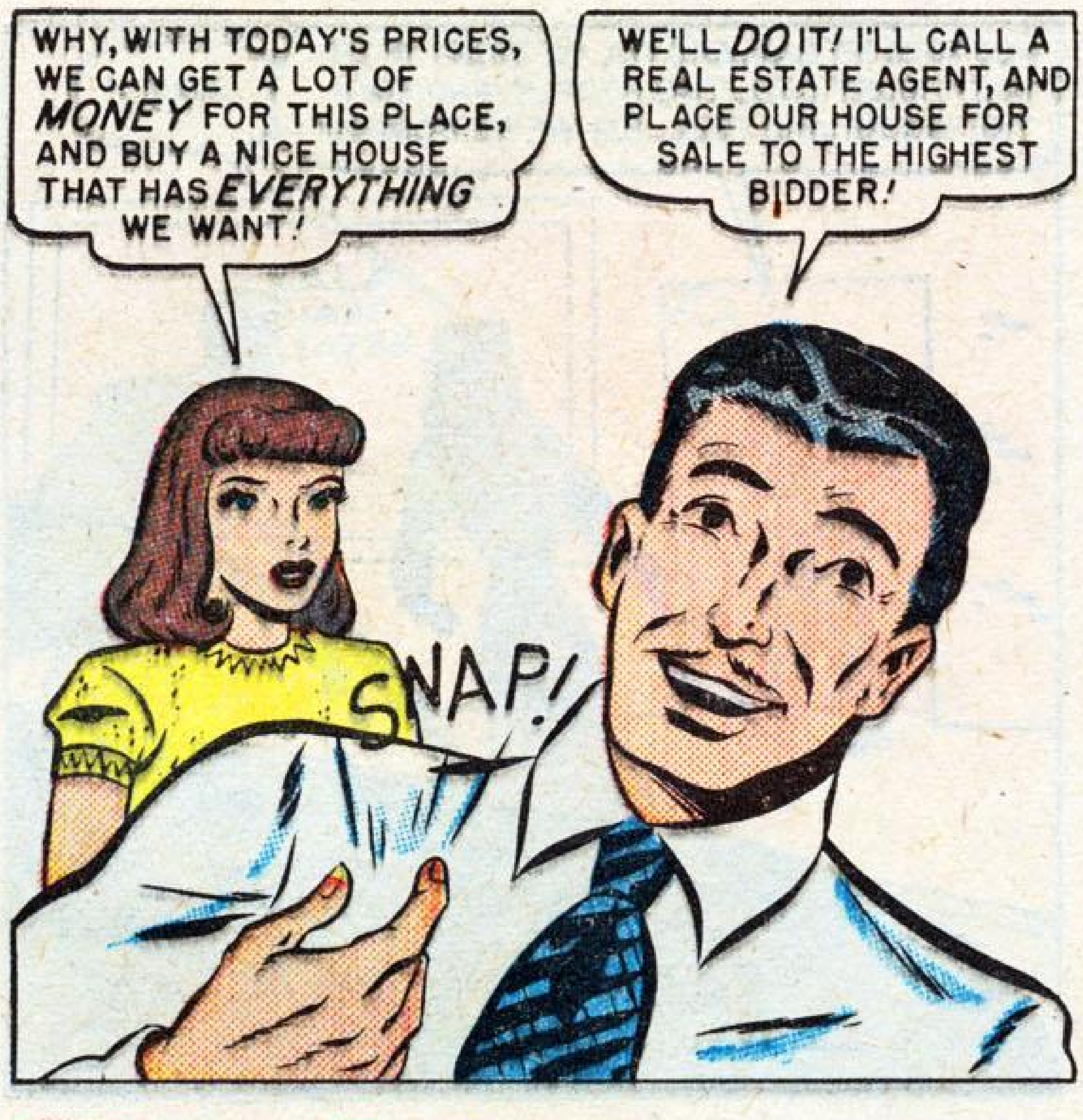
PATSY WALKER

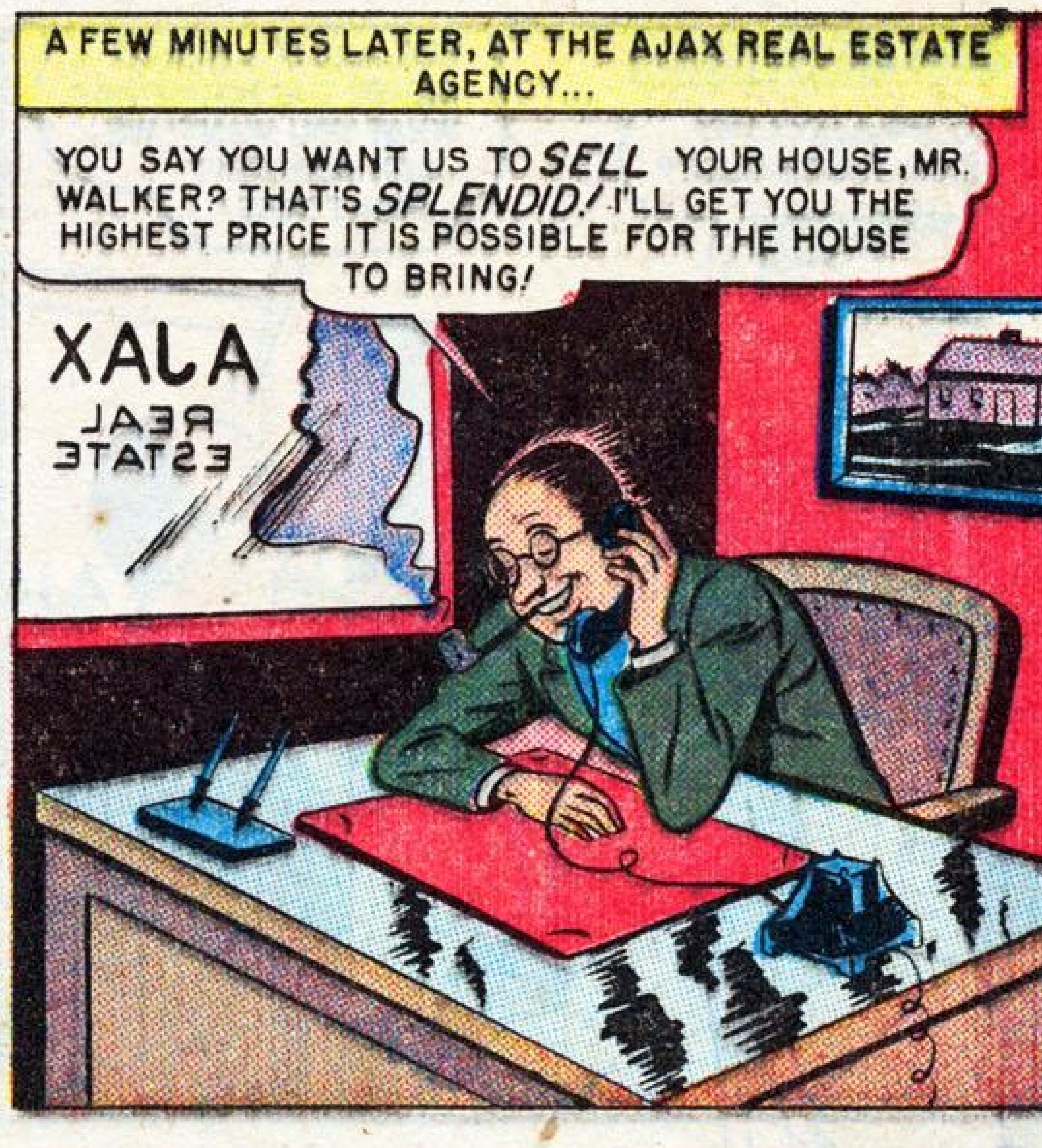
IN "RACE FOR SPACE!"

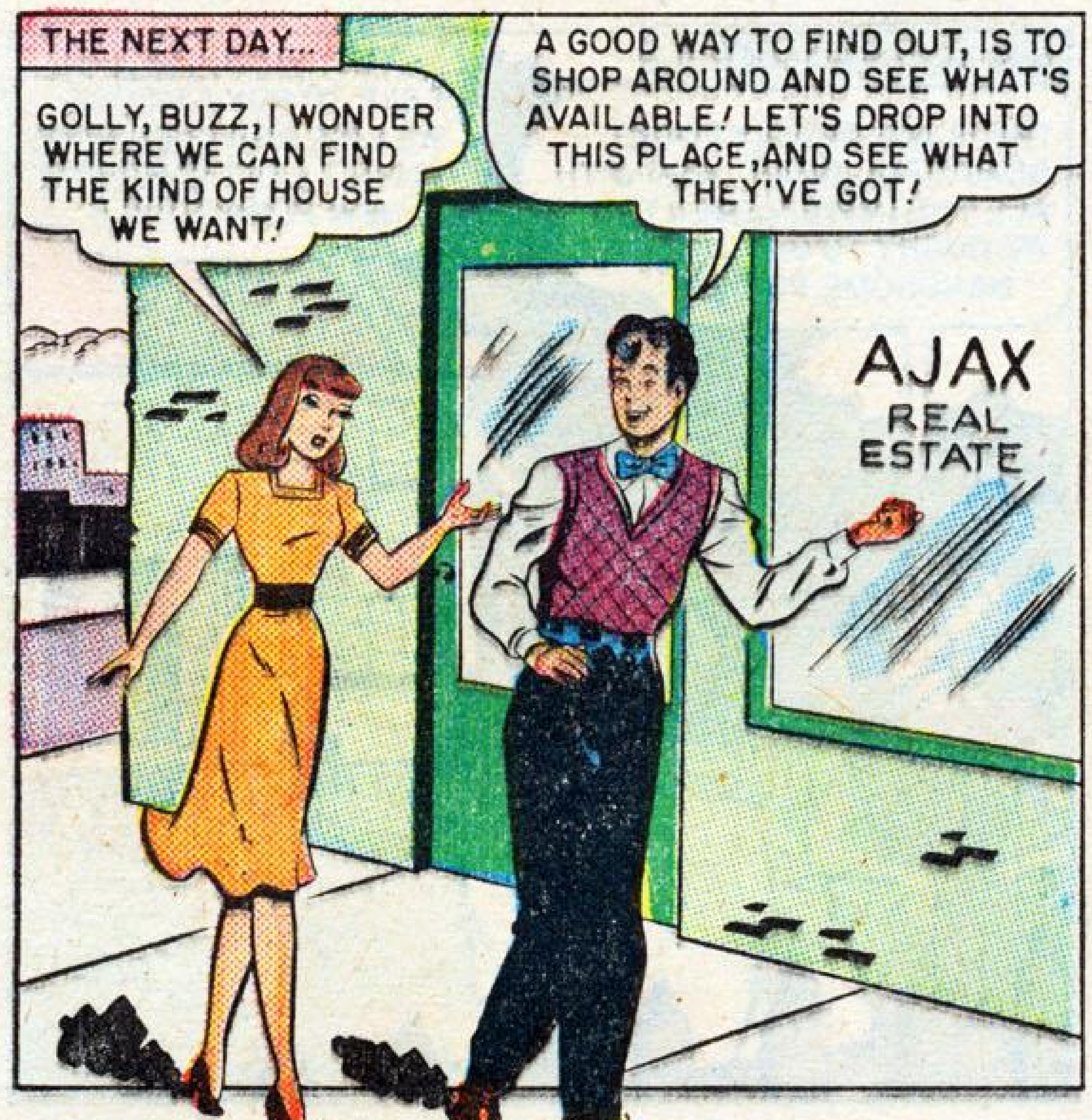

NO VACANCY
4202
A.J.

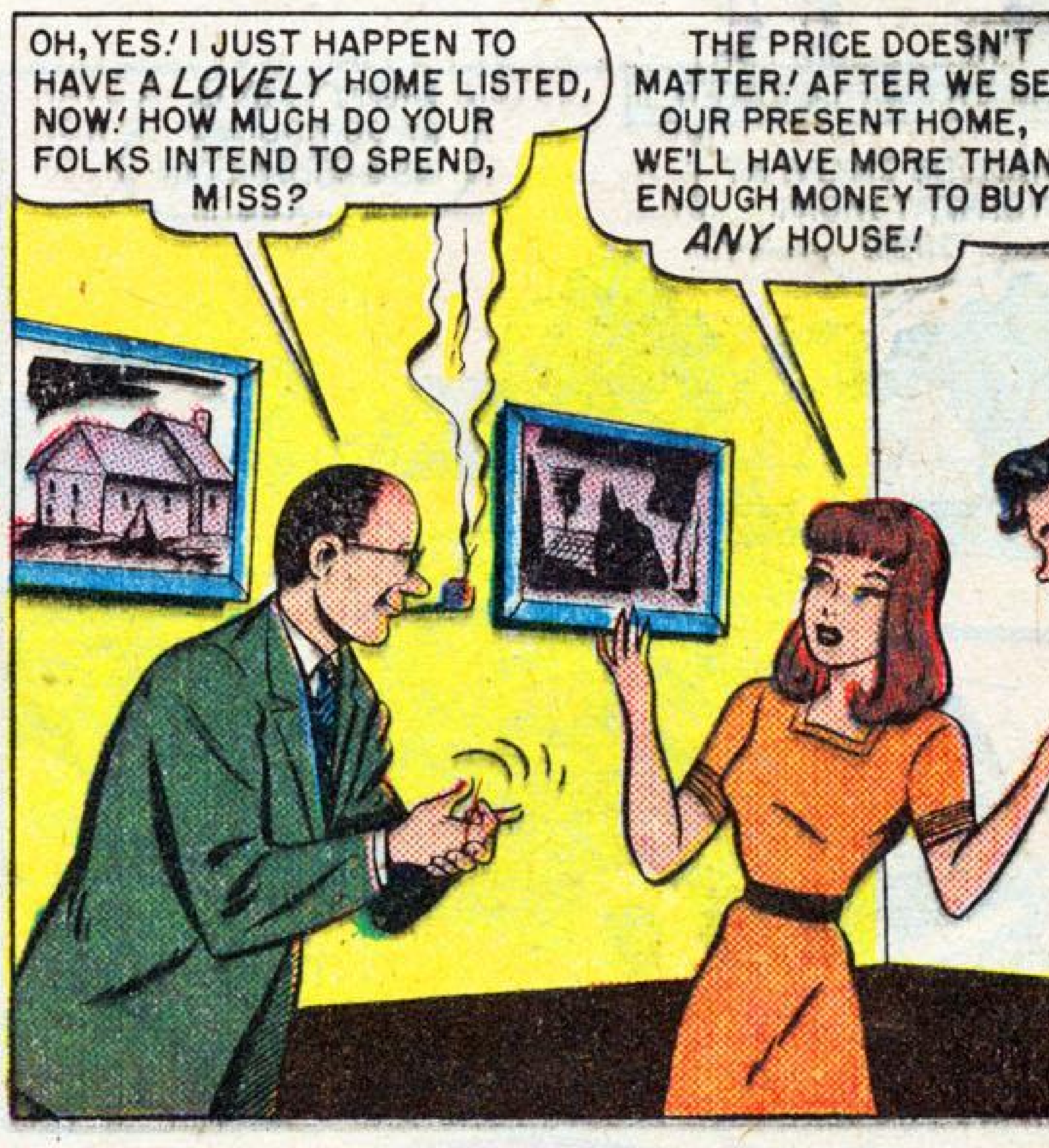

ONE QUIET EVENING IN THE WALKER LIVING ROOM...
CHILDREN, I MUST TALK TO YOU! I'VE GOT SOME VERY IMPORTANT THINGS TO WORK ON! PATSY, PLEASE TURN THAT RADIO OFF!
1

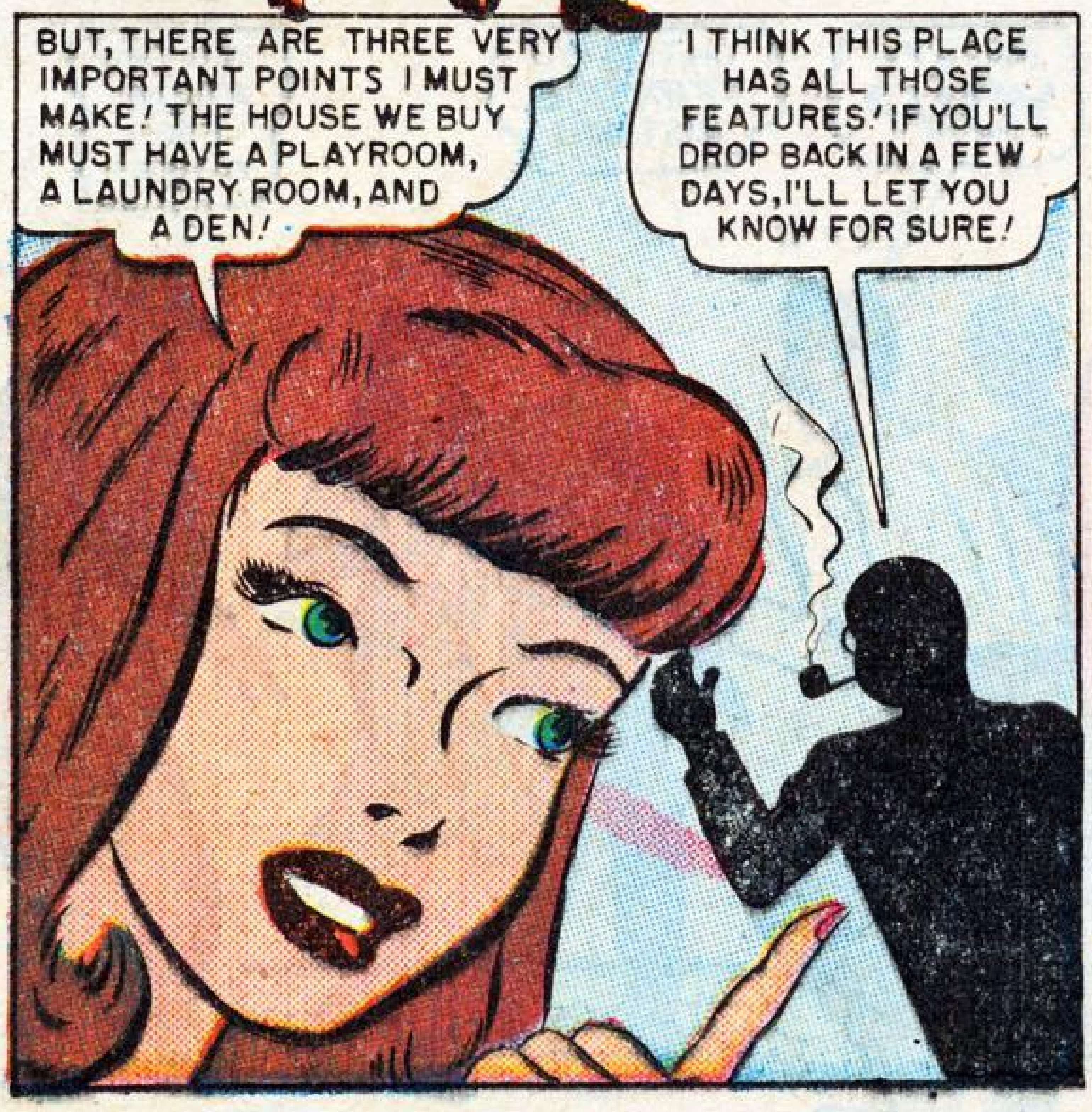

MICKEY...YOU'LL HAVE TO CLEAR ALL YOUR JUNK OUT OF HERE! I'M GOING TO BE BUSY ALL EVENING, AND I'M GOING TO USE THIS ROOM!
AW, DAD...I'LL NEVER GET MY PLANE FINISHED! I ALWAYS HAVE TO GET *OUT* OF *THIS ROOM!*
OH, DADDY...AND I WAS FIGURING ON HAVING THE GANG OVER FOR SOME *DANCING*, TONIGHT!
I'M SORRY, PATSY, BUT THAT'S *OUT*, TOO! I'LL NEED THIS ROOM ALL TO MYSELF!
I'M SORRY, TOO, STANLEY DEAR, BUT I DON'T THINK YOU CAN HAVE THINGS YOUR WAY! I SIMPLY *MUST* DO MY IRONING, AND THIS IS THE *ONLY* PLACE IN WHICH I CAN DO IT!
YE GADS! HOW AM I EVER GOING TO GET ANY WORK DONE AROUND HERE? WHAT I NEED IS A *DEN!*
AS LONG AS WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THINGS WE NEED...HOW ABOUT A *LAUNDRY ROOM* FOR ME?
...AND HOW ABOUT A *PLAYROOM* FOR *US?*
WELL, WHAT D'YOU EXPECT ME TO DO ABOUT IT? THE ONLY *REAL* SOLUTION IS A *NEW HOUSE* AND...
WHAT A WONDERFUL IDEA, DEAR! WE COULD FIND ONE WITH A NICE LARGE *LAUNDRY ROOM!*
YES! AND WE'D LOOK FOR ONE THAT HAS A *PLAYROOM* FOR US, AND A *DEN* FOR YOU, DADDY!

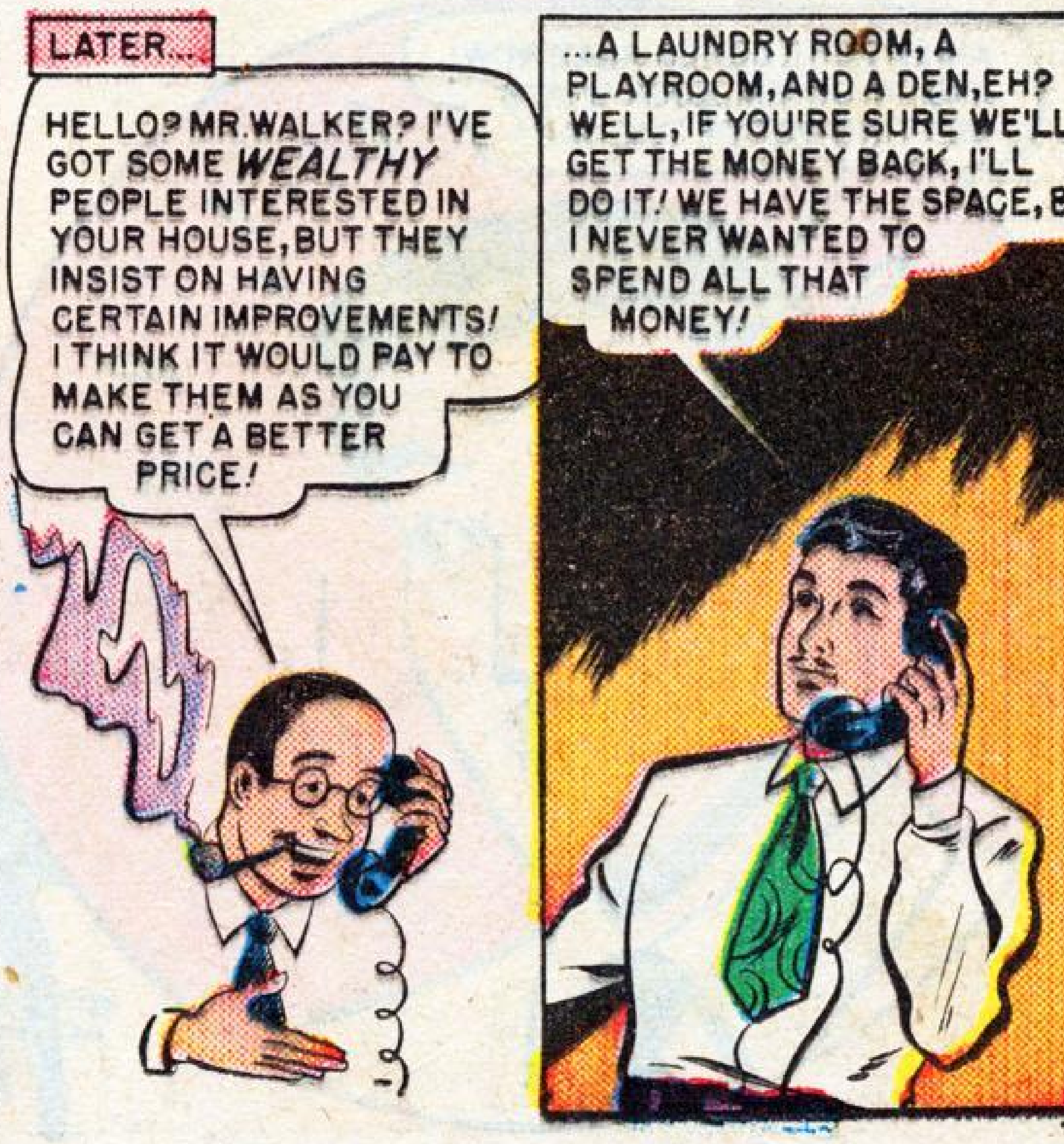

WHY, WITH TODAY'S PRICES, WE CAN GET A LOT OF *MONEY* FOR THIS PLACE, AND BUY A NICE HOUSE THAT HAS *EVERYTHING* WE WANT!
WE'LL *DO* IT! I'LL CALL A REAL ESTATE AGENT, AND PLACE OUR HOUSE FOR SALE TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER!
SNAP!

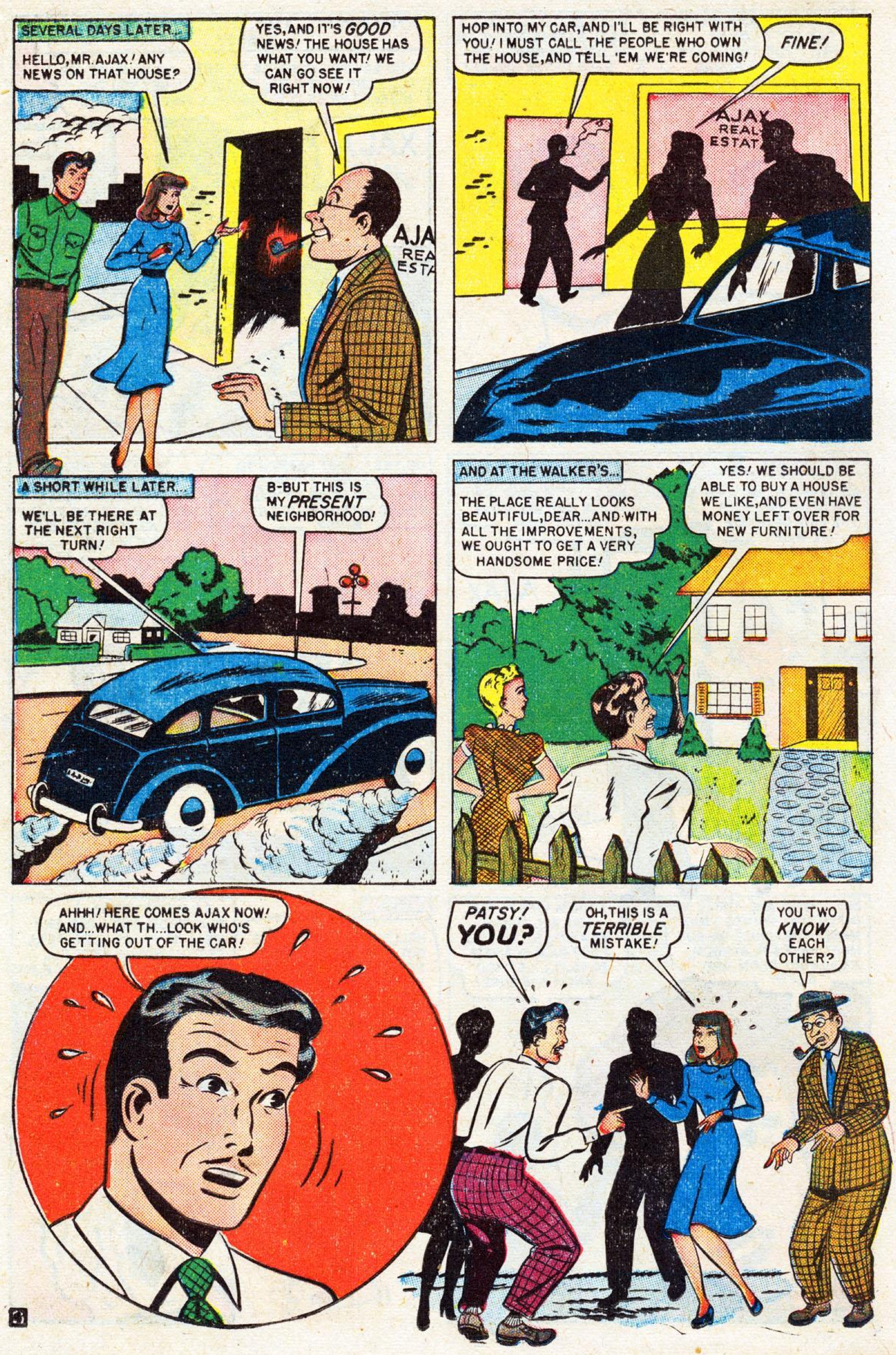

A FEW MINUTES LATER, AT THE AJAX REAL ESTATE AGENCY...
YOU SAY YOU WANT US TO *SELL* YOUR HOUSE, MR. WALKER? THAT'S *SPLENDID!* I'LL GET YOU THE HIGHEST PRICE IT IS POSSIBLE FOR THE HOUSE TO BRING!

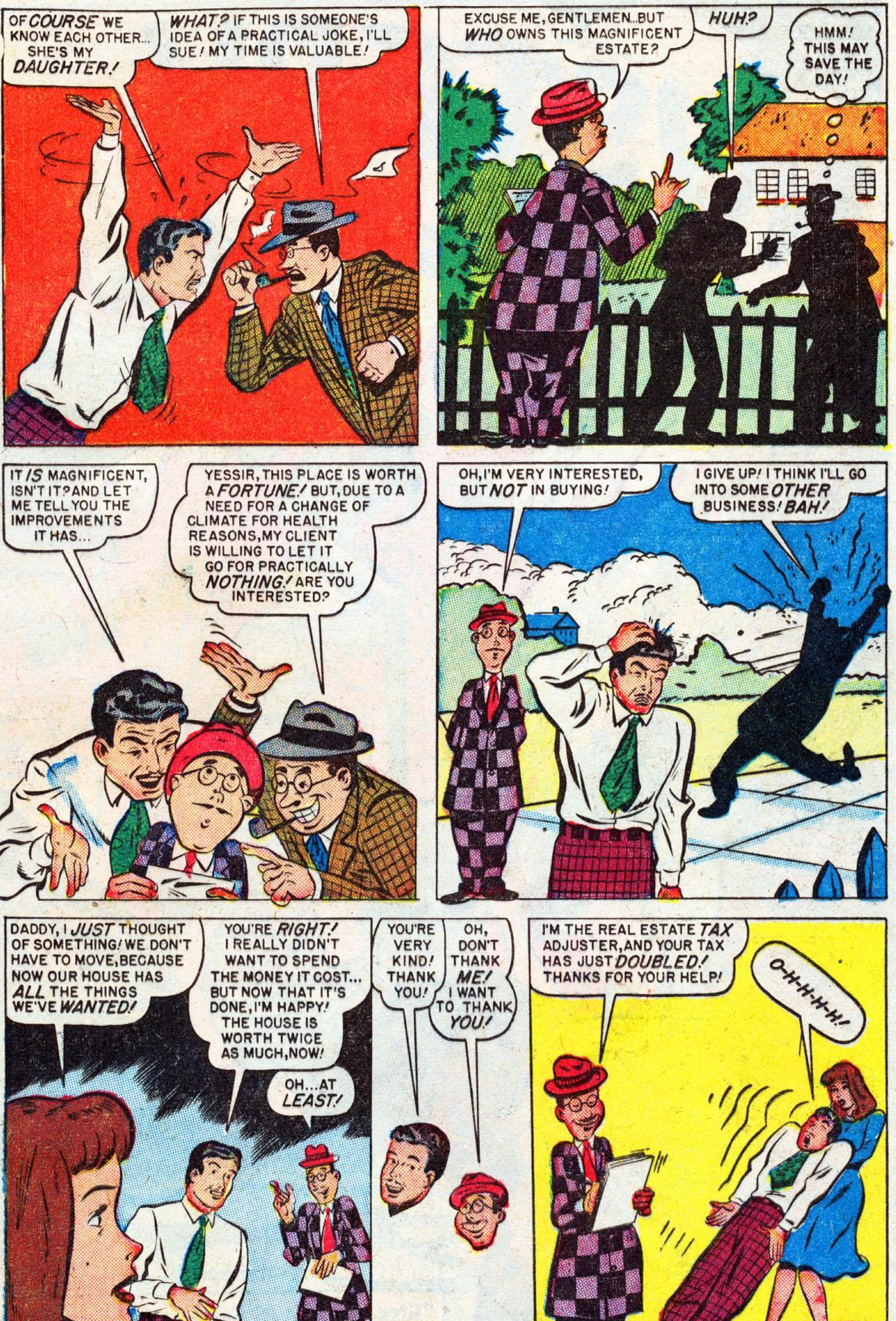

THE NEXT DAY...
GOLLY, BUZZ, I WONDER WHERE WE CAN FIND THE KIND OF HOUSE WE WANT!
A GOOD WAY TO FIND OUT, IS TO SHOP AROUND AND SEE WHAT'S AVAILABLE! LET'S DROP INTO THIS PLACE, AND SEE WHAT THEY'VE GOT!
AJAX REAL ESTATE


OH, YES! I JUST HAPPEN TO HAVE A *LOVELY* HOME LISTED, NOW! HOW MUCH DO YOUR FOLKS INTEND TO SPEND, MISS?
THE PRICE DOESN'T MATTER! AFTER WE SELL OUR PRESENT HOME, WE'LL HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY *ANY* HOUSE!


BUT, THERE ARE THREE VERY IMPORTANT POINTS I MUST MAKE! THE HOUSE WE BUY MUST HAVE A PLAYROOM, A LAUNDRY ROOM, AND A DEN!
I THINK THIS PLACE HAS ALL THOSE FEATURES! IF YOU'LL DROP BACK IN A FEW DAYS, I'LL LET YOU KNOW FOR SURE!


LATER...
HELLO? MR. WALKER? I'VE GOT SOME *WEALTHY* PEOPLE INTERESTED IN YOUR HOUSE, BUT THEY INSIST ON HAVING CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS! I THINK IT WOULD PAY TO MAKE THEM AS YOU CAN GET A BETTER PRICE!
...A LAUNDRY ROOM, A PLAYROOM, AND A DEN, EH? WELL, IF YOU'RE SURE WE'LL GET THE MONEY BACK, I'LL DO IT! WE HAVE THE SPACE, BUT I NEVER WANTED TO SPEND ALL THAT MONEY!


SEVERAL DAYS LATER...
HELLO, MR. AJAX! ANY NEWS ON THAT HOUSE?
YES, AND IT'S *GOOD* NEWS! THE HOUSE HAS WHAT YOU WANT! WE CAN GO SEE IT RIGHT NOW!
AJAX REAL ESTA
HOP INTO MY CAR, AND I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU! I MUST CALL THE PEOPLE WHO OWN THE HOUSE, AND TELL 'EM WE'RE COMING!
FINE!
AJAX REAL ESTAT
A SHORT WHILE LATER...
WE'LL BE THERE AT THE NEXT RIGHT TURN!
B-BUT THIS IS MY *PRESENT* NEIGHBORHOOD!
AND AT THE WALKER'S...
THE PLACE REALLY LOOKS BEAUTIFUL, DEAR... AND WITH ALL THE IMPROVEMENTS, WE OUGHT TO GET A VERY HANDSOME PRICE!
YES! WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO BUY A HOUSE WE LIKE, AND EVEN HAVE MONEY LEFT OVER FOR NEW FURNITURE!
AHHH! HERE COMES AJAX NOW! AND... WHAT TH... LOOK WHO'S GETTING OUT OF THE CAR!
PATSY! YOU?
OH, THIS IS A *TERRIBLE* MISTAKE!
YOU TWO *KNOW* EACH OTHER?


OF *COURSE* WE KNOW EACH OTHER... SHE'S MY *DAUGHTER!*
WHAT? IF THIS IS SOMEONE'S IDEA OF A PRACTICAL JOKE, I'LL SUE! MY TIME IS VALUABLE!
EXCUSE ME, GENTLEMEN...BUT *WHO* OWNS THIS MAGNIFICENT ESTATE?
HUH?
HMM! THIS MAY SAVE THE DAY!
IT *IS* MAGNIFICENT, ISN'T IT? AND LET ME TELL YOU THE IMPROVEMENTS IT HAS...
YESSIR, THIS PLACE IS WORTH A *FORTUNE!* BUT, DUE TO A NEED FOR A CHANGE OF CLIMATE FOR HEALTH REASONS, MY CLIENT IS WILLING TO LET IT GO FOR PRACTICALLY *NOTHING!* ARE YOU INTERESTED?
OH, I'M VERY INTERESTED, BUT *NOT* IN BUYING!
I GIVE UP! I THINK I'LL GO INTO SOME *OTHER* BUSINESS! *BAH!*
DADDY, I *JUST* THOUGHT OF SOMETHING! WE DON'T HAVE TO MOVE, BECAUSE NOW OUR HOUSE HAS *ALL* THE THINGS WE'VE *WANTED!*
YOU'RE *RIGHT!* I REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO SPEND THE MONEY IT COST... BUT NOW THAT IT'S DONE, I'M HAPPY! THE HOUSE IS WORTH TWICE AS MUCH, NOW!
OH...AT *LEAST!*
YOU'RE VERY KIND! THANK YOU!
OH, DON'T THANK *ME!* I WANT TO THANK *YOU!*
I'M THE REAL ESTATE *TAX* ADJUSTER, AND YOUR TAX HAS JUST *DOUBLED!* THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!
O-H-H-H-H-H!
THE END

MYSTERY AT MIDNIGHT

PRUDENCE WAS SUPPOSED TO BRING LUCK TO ADMIRERS, BUT WOULD SHE LIVE UP TO HER REPUTATION THIS TIME? CAROL AND GREG HAD TO FIND OUT!

"GREG, don't do it! Come back!" Carol Gray's voice was lost in the shouts of the crowd. Horrified, she watched Gregory Benson disappear into the burning clubhouse. She held her breath for what seemed hours before he appeared again, carrying Prudence. He was soot-blackened, but otherwise he seemed undamaged. He staggered toward Carol and carefully put down the four-foot plaster piggy bank named Prudence.

"She's okay," Greg said, "except for this broken ear, but I guess that can be fixed."

Carol let out her breath slowly. She was relieved, but she shook her dark hair angrily. "Greg, you shouldn't have risked your neck for that silly pig!"

"Carol!" There was indignation in Greg's tone. "You know what Prudence means to the kids at Eastover High. I don't think we could take it if *both* the clubhouse and the pig were gone."

"Gone?" The word made a cold emptiness inside Carol. She knew only too well the importance of the clubhouse and that grinning plaster pig. For two years Prudence had stood in the school's main hall, a willing receptacle for every cent the students could spare. They'd worked so hard, but it had always seemed so hopeless. Then Carol's father had stepped in. Quietly he'd bought the land and built the club. Only this morning the paint had been pronounced dry. Prudence was carried across the threshold like a bride. Everyone had been back at the school, planning a party which would formally open the new club, when the fire alarm had sounded. "Gone?" Carol repeated.

By TRIPP HAMMOND

"Greg, don't do it! Come back!" Carol Gray's voice was lost in the shouts of the crowd.

Greg nodded. "Inside's like a furnace. There's no hope for it," he said softly.

At that moment an explosion rumbled from the house, and sheets of flame enveloped the building. The crowd pressed back in panic.

In the confusion Carol was separated from Greg. A hand clutched her arm, and the sneering face of Mr. Lester was thrust close to hers. "Young woman, your father will have to answer for this," he said, "building a firetrap for the high school!" Lester was one of the richest men in town, but he disliked Carol's father, one of the most popular. Carol tore her arm away and pushed through the crowd. She found herself standing next to Mr. Lewis, the contractor who had built the club. His stricken face moved her to pity. "Don't worry, Mr. Lewis," she said. "It wasn't your fault."

"Thank you," he said—almost tearfully, Carol thought. "Thank you."

They watched the flames rapidly diminish, leaving nothing but a pile of ashes. The clubhouse was gone. Carol stood stunned and incredulous.

At school the next morning Carol knew that her fellow students would be as dejected as she about losing the club. But she wasn't at all prepared for the reception they gave her. In the halls no one returned her greetings. Her closest friends looked through her as if she weren't there. In her history class Miss Peterman, who always depended on her recitation, didn't call on her once. Finally, Mr. Beller, the school principal, appeared by her desk in the study hall. "Someone wants to see you in my office," he said.

After what had been happening all day long, Carol almost wasn't surprised to find a policeman waiting for her there. "Sit down, Miss Gray," he said. "I've some questions to ask you." He opened a notebook. "Where is your father?"

"In New York," she answered. "He's been there for two weeks."

The policeman wrote in his notebook. Then he asked, "Did you know that a chain store recently offered your father a lot of money for the club's land?"

"I think I heard something about it," Carol said slowly.

"And did you know that your father had the clubhouse heavily insured?"

"No, I didn't know that," she answered.

The policeman hesitated. "Were you told that your father has ordered an expensive roadster for you?"

Carol gulped. "N-no," she stammered, "I knew he'd give me something for graduation, but . . ."

Mr. Beller came in then with Greg. One look at Greg, and Carol knew he'd been getting treatment just like hers. His outstanding feature was a black eye!

"This is Gregory Benson. His father owns the newspaper," Mr. Beller said and left.

"You both were with the group that carried that plaster . . . uh . . . animal into the clubhouse. Afterward you two returned to the house for ten minutes," the policeman said. "Why?"

Greg blushed. "We have sort of a superstition about Prudence — that pig," he said. "She's supposed to bring us luck if we scratch her behind the ear. We had a tough math exam coming up . . ."

The policeman closed his book. "That's all," he said. "I'll talk to you again later." He walked out.

"Greg, I don't understand," Carol said as soon as they were alone. "What does all this mean?"

"They think we did it, Carol," he answered. "They think *we* burned down the clubhouse!"

He must be joking, she thought. "But that's absurd!"

"*Absurd!*" Greg said bitterly. "Carol, the police know for sure that *someone* started that fire. Old Mr. Lester has been suggesting to everyone that your father may have promised you a new car if you'd do it. And you were supposed to have talked me into helping you. The story is that your father built the club for political publicity because he's going to run for mayor and that now he can get back everything he spent from insurance, sell the land at a big profit, and still have everyone's good will for the gesture he made to the school."

"How could anyone believe Dad would do a thing like that?" Carol asked angrily.

Greg shrugged. "I didn't believe anyone could either—until I got this shiner. Carol, we're in a tough spot. We've got to *do* something!"

"What can we do?" Carol asked helplessly. Then, "unless we find out who really started the fire."

Greg looked up. "That gives me an idea," he said. "Right after school I'm going to see old Mrs. Luper. She lives next door to the club and spends most of her time at her window watching everything that goes on. Maybe she saw someone else go into it."

Carol stood up. "Come over to my house afterward," she suggested.

Greg nodded. "We'd better get back to our classes," he said, adding with a thin smile, "don't get into any more trouble."

"Don't *you* get into any more fights," Carol said.

Greg rang her bell at 6:30. "Did you find out anything?" she asked him even before he stepped inside.

"I certainly did," he answered triumphantly. "We definitely were *not* the only people to visit the club."

Carol led him into the living room. "Tell me," she said.

"At 11:05," Greg began, "Mr. Beller went into the club through the back door and stayed for fifteen minutes. And at 11:30 Coach Willow went in also through the back and stayed for ten minutes. What do you think of that?"

Carol leaned forward tensely. "Both of them were against our having the club!"

Greg nodded. "Beller thinks we should have all our social activities in the school under the supervision of the teachers. And Willow believes we should be indoors as little as possible. He was violently against the club."

"Do you suppose one of them started the fire?" Carol asked.

"Wait! You haven't heard the whole story yet," Greg said. "Mr. Lewis, the contractor, arrived at 11:45. He used the front entrance. And then — listen to this! — who should make a visit at noon but Mr. Lester! He stayed until just before we went in with Prudence. You and I were the last ones there before the fire, but any of the others could have started it if some fuse arrangement were used."

"Let's ask those people a few questions," Carol said. "You see Willow and Lester, and I'll speak to Beller and Lewis.

Later, back at Carol's house, they compared notes. They'd learned that Beller's curiosity had led him to the club, but, because he'd been so outspoken against it, he'd felt embarrassed about showing an open interest in it. Willow felt the same way. He'd gone in to see if the game room were large enough for a ping pong table. Lewis said he'd been checking to see if the electricity had been turned on.

Lester, of course, had raved abuse against Carol's father. He called the club a cheap publicity stunt for Mr. Gray's political ambitions and said he was against it because parents should keep their children at home. He'd visited the place to investigate the extent of "all this foolishness."

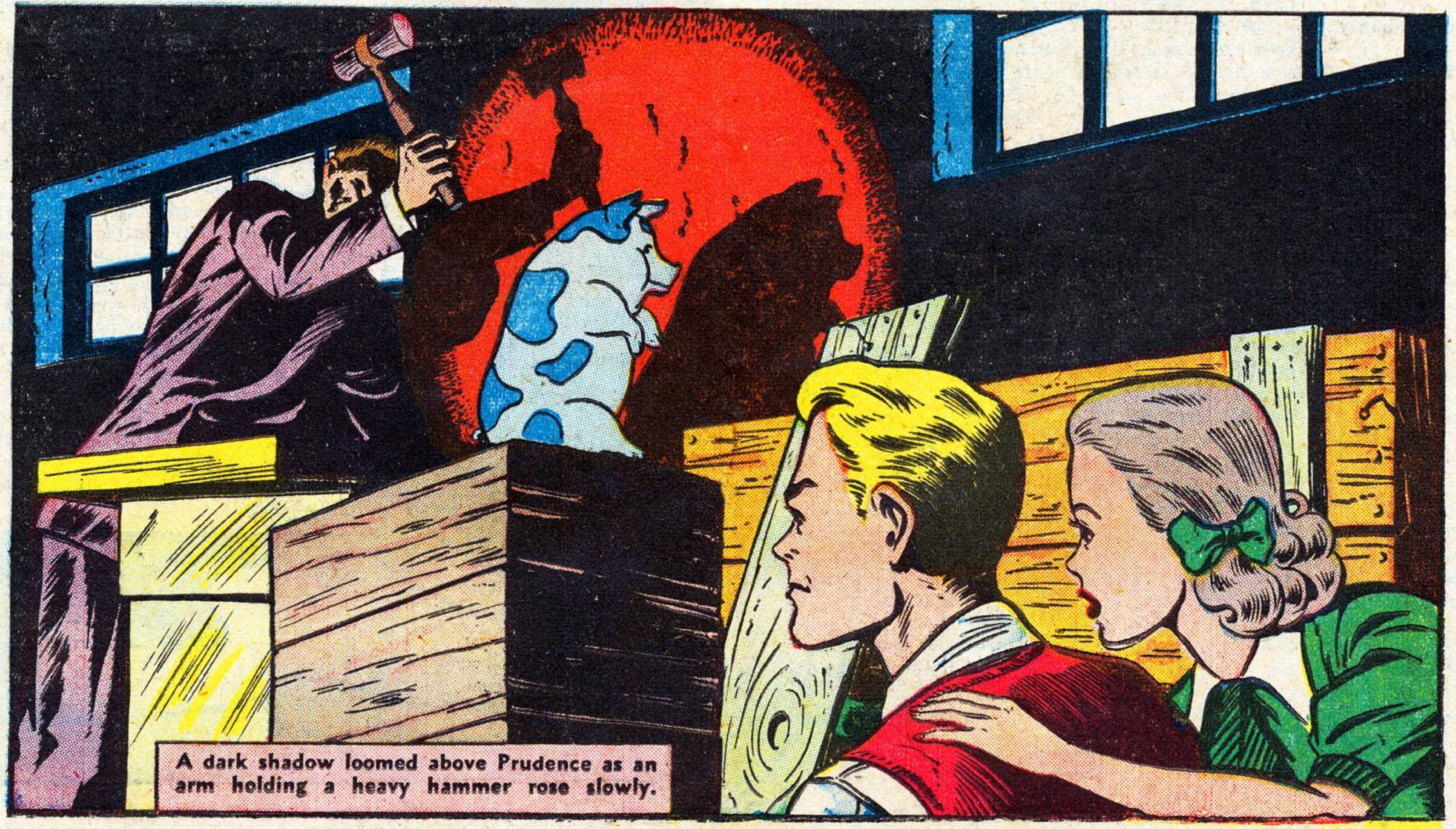
Greg shook his head and frowned. "The culprit should be one of them," he said, "but how can we find out which one?"

At school the next day Carol sensed that the feeling toward Greg and her had intensified. It was close to actual hostility. No one spoke to her, and whenever she entered a room, the others left or turned their backs to her. But somehow she managed to get through the day. She met Greg immediately after school. "We must do something quickly," she said nervously. "I can't stand much more."

"I know. It's grim," Greg agreed. "Did you learn anything new?"

"One small item," Carol said. "The latest is that the fire was started with a chemical. They think it was a cellulose nitrate compound, crudely made."

Greg stiffened. "Beller used to be a chemistry teacher before he became superintendent! If a flash powder were used, that would make a fuse arrangement practical, too!"



A dark shadow loomed above Prudence as an arm holding a heavy hammer rose slowly.

"Now we're getting somewhere!" Carol exclaimed.

"But there's still a lot of proving to do," Greg said. "Let's try to remember everything we saw in the club."

They both thought hard. "We carried Prudence through the front door," Greg began. "The place smelled of fresh paint. The floors were sticky from varnish, and they creaked. We put Prudence down, but we had to move her about to find a place where she'd stand solidly."

"We went back to scratch the pig's ear," Carol added. "And we talked about the celebration party for ten minutes.

"When I went in again, there was too much smoke to see anything. Debris was everywhere. I found Prudence all right, but her ear was broken off . . ." Greg suddenly stood stock-still. He chewed his lip, frowning. Carol knew he was excited about something, and her own excitement rose in response. "Where is Prudence now?" he demanded.

"In the school basement," she replied.

"Linda, I think I've got it—the answer to the whole problem!" His voice was shaky.

"Oh, Greg, tell me!"

"Whoever started that fire decided quickly to do it. He probably feels safe now because the case against us looks so black. But we might scare him into *thinking* he made a blunder. I'll ask my father to put a piece into tomorrow's paper saying there's a new suspect in the case and that Prudence is the clue!"

"What can I do?" Carol asked eagerly.

"Plenty," Greg said. He took her arm, and they ran.

The next day no one believed the story in the paper. They thought Greg's father was just trying to protect him. It was after three before Carol had a chance to see Greg alone. "Did you get the basement window open?" she asked.

He nodded. "It's all set," he said. "I'll meet you after it gets dark—about ten." He gave her an encouraging smile. "Don't be late."

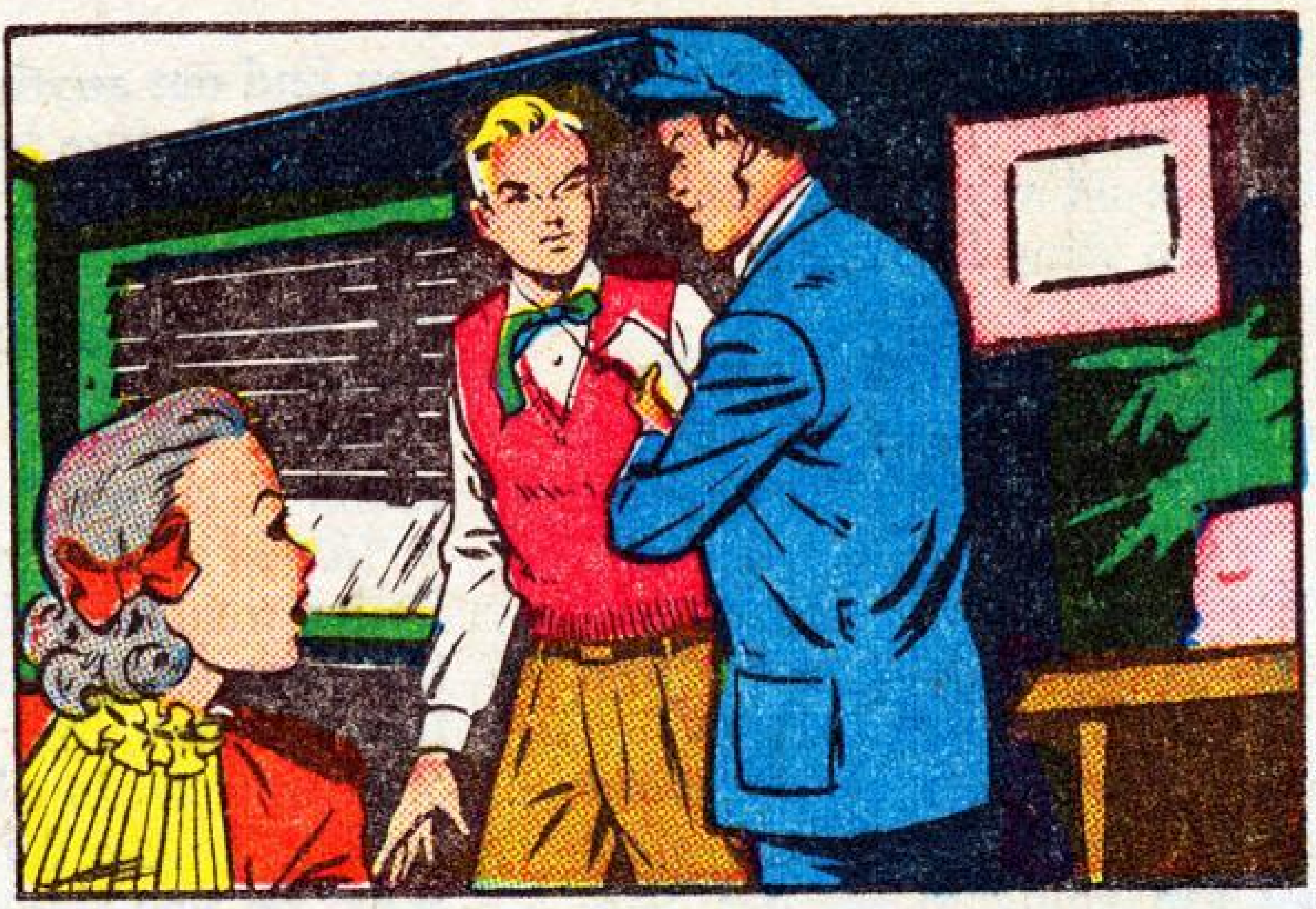
"It's a date," she said bravely.

The basement of the school was pitch dark that night. When they were inside, Greg switched on a flashlight and they examined Prudence. Except for her broken ear, she was undamaged. Each of them scratched her behind the other ear. "Stand by us, Prudence," Carol pleaded

Greg pulled a desk close to the pig, and they hid down behind it to begin their wait. The silence was oppressive. The sound of her heartbeats seemed to magnify until Carol thought they could be heard through the whole building. The minutes dragged painfully. Eleven o'clock. A mouse skittered across the floor, and Carol stifled a scream. Greg squeezed her hand reassuringly. Midnight. She felt they had been there an eternity. "Oh, Greg, what if nothing happens?" she whispered.

"Don't think about that," he replied. "Think about your father's coming back tonight. He'll be another person on our side."

Poor Dad, Carol thought, he was so kind and gentle. This would be horrible for him. "Greg, what will they do to him?"



One look at Greg, and Carol knew he'd been getting treatment just like hers.

"*Shhh!*" Greg squeezed her arm hard, and she heard a movement on the stairs. Then a beam of light flashed along the wall. Carol held her breath. Now they heard cautious footsteps coming closer. Again the beam of light slid searchingly around the room. It found Prudence and held her in the light. A dark shadow loomed above her as an arm holding a heavy hammer rose slowly. Then there was a sudden explosion of light and sound. A door crashed open, and the room was full of running, shouting people.

Carol spotted her father, and, with a cry, she ran to him. He held her safe and protected. "There, there," he said softly, "you're all right now."

She turned then and saw Greg struggling on the floor with a man. Policemen came to Greg's aid and soon had the struggling figure handcuffed.

"There's the man who burned down our clubhouse," Carol said. "Mr. Lewis, the contractor."

"He tried to make a huge profit out of the job," Greg explained, "by using only the cheapest materials. But they were *too* shoddy. On the day of the fire he began to suspect the building wouldn't hold together at all. He was there when Carol and I went back, but we didn't see him.

"After we left, something happened. Perhaps one of the roof beams gave way, fell, and broke Prudence's ear off. Then he knew he'd not be able to hide his breach of contract. He'd be caught, disgraced, so he decided to destroy the evidence, but he knew he couldn't disguise a fire. Then he realized that Mr. Gray and we would be blamed so he didn't try to hide it. He made a crude flash powder out of various building materials and set it off."

What happened after that was not quite clear to Carol. Her father said that a new clubhouse would be built immediately. A public apology was extracted from Mr. Lester. Mr. Beller made a speech about Eastover's two young heroes and how the school would honor them for what they had suffered.

Carol and Greg looked at each other then, and their hands met over the broad back of the plaster pig. "Dear Prudence, isn't she beautiful?" Carol exclaimed.

"Beautiful!" Greg agreed, his fond grin including Carol as well as Prudence.

THE END

FOOD FOR FUN

CHEESE CAKE . . .

Any time is a good time to indulge in a fine old-fashioned cheese cake — and there's no time like the present!

First, mix two cups of finely crushed zwieback crumbs with half a cup of sugar and about a teaspoon of cinnamon. Rub in half a cup of melted butter until it's thoroughly blended. Put half a cup of the mixture aside to use later, and press the rest into a spring form pan, lining the bottom and sides firmly.

Now beat up four eggs with a cup of sugar until light and lemon-colored. then add a pinch of salt, a couple of teaspoons of grated lemon rind, 1½ tablespoons of lemon juice and a cup of cream or evaporated milk. Stir in 1½ pounds of cottage cheese and 4 tablespoons of flour. Beat the mixture hard, and then press it through a fine sieve. Pour it into the crumb-lined pan, and sprinkle the top with the crumbs you've set aside and some chopped nuts.

The cheese cake should bake in a moderate oven for about an hour until the center is set. Then the heat should be turned off and the oven door left open for the cake to cook for an hour more in the oven.

A different version of cheese cake uses sour cream and has a cookie dough shell rather than the zwieback one. To make this type, press 1¼ pounds of cottage cheese through a ricer, and add to it 4 tablespoons of cornstarch and a dash of salt. Mix and stir in the yolks of five eggs, and then add a pint of thick sour cream. Beat the mixture well so that it is smoothly blended. Now add one cup of sugar and fold in the beaten whites of the eggs. Line a spring form pan with cookie dough, and turn in the cheese mixture. Bake the cheese cake in a moderate oven for about an hour until it is well set and brown on the bottom.

SALAD SURPRISE . . .

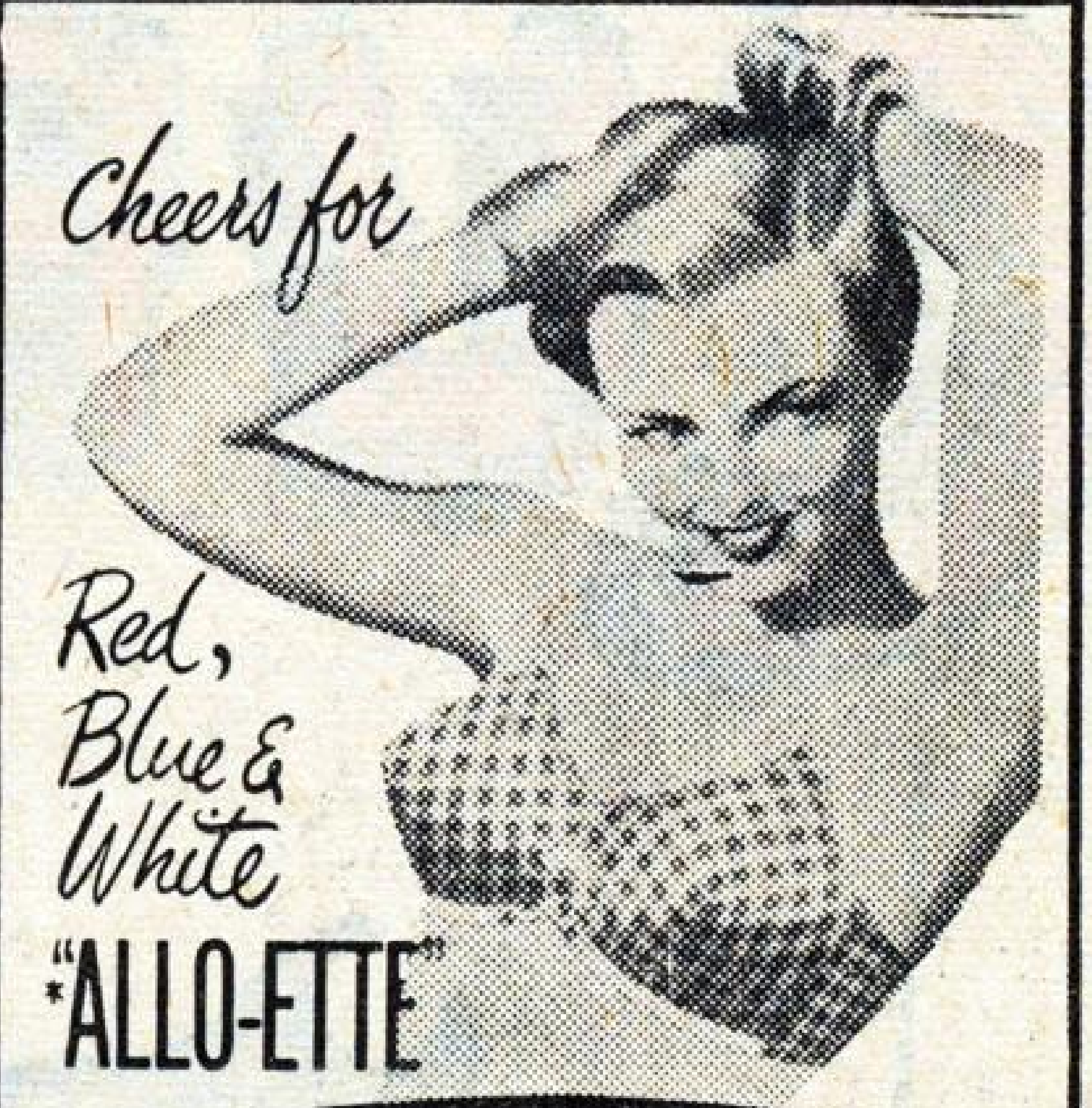
For an unusual, but wonderful, salad, combine a cooked celery knob with cooked beets, set upon lettuce leaves, and serve with a sour cream dressing.

If you're not familiar with a celery knob, or celeriac, here's how it's prepared:

Buy a firm, not too large celery knob at the market and trim it of any roots and leaves. Some people like to eat it raw, but it may be too strong for some tastes that way. Peel the knob and cut it into slices ¼-inch thick. Cook these in boiling salted water for about 20 minutes—until the slices are tender to a fork. Drain them and set them in the refrigerator to chill.

The beets are cooked as usual, with the skins and taproots on to prevent "bleeding." When they're done, the skins are slipped off under cold water, the roots cut and the beets sliced and set to chill.

When the time comes to serve the salad, arrange the celeriac and beet slices alternately, overlapping each other, on a bed of lettuce leaves, and dress with a sour cream mixture containing chopped chives and a dash of horse radish.



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SHEPHERD SPECIAL . . .

For a wonderful old-fashioned dish that never loses its popularity, there's nothing like Shepherd's Pie.

Chop or ground finely 2 or 3 cups of cold cooked meat—lamb is traditional—and put it in the bottom of a greased baking dish. Add to it a couple of onions that have been browned in fat and the fat itself. Season the meat with salt and pepper and a dash of chili sauce or ketchup.

Then cover the meat with a layer of mashed potatoes—about 2 cups—and brush the top with 2 egg yolks mixed with 3 tablespoons of milk. Bake the pie in a moderate oven until the top is browned and the meat bubbling with juices.

One mouthful — and you'll agree that the ancient shepherds knew a good meal when they found one!

CUPID WITH A RIFLE

WHEN AN OUTDOOR GIRL AND A BOY FROM THE CITY GO HUNTING FOR LIONS ON A RANCH, EVERYONE SHOULD EXPECT SURPRISES!

"DOTS HARRIGAN," Sally exclaimed, "are you actually saying that you have a secret crush on some boy?"

I scowled at the dainty little blonde who is my cousin Sally. "I'm tired of being the sister and best pal to every boy and girl in the gang," I said. "I'm not ugly, am I? Why *can't* I have a boy friend of my own?"

"I didn't think there was a boy at Thompson High athletic enough to keep up with you," Sally said. "The one you'd pick must be better than Atlas. Who is he?"

I admit I've been sort of a tomboy. Anyway, I'm no good at feminine wiles, and telling my secret wasn't easy. But Sally stayed with us to go to school because her parents lived on a ranch, and she was like a sister. "Dennis Blane," I answered.

Sally gaped at me. "Not that new boy from New York?"

"What's wrong with his being from New York?" I asked huffily.

She let herself flop onto the sofa. "Nothing," she said hastily. "He's a gorgeous specimen of young manhood. But you can ride, hunt, fish, swim and play golf and tennis better than most boys. And *he*—well, at least he looks good in evening clothes."

"Dennis is no sissy," I said.

Sally shook her head sadly. "No, but he's probably scared of you," she said.

"I want you to invite him out to your father's ranch with the rest of the gang," I said.

Sally put a sisterly hand on my shoulder. "I'd be glad to, Dots," she said. "But is it wise? The sophisticated type like Dennis doesn't stand up very well in the wide-open spaces, and you'll make him look even worse. He won't like you for it."

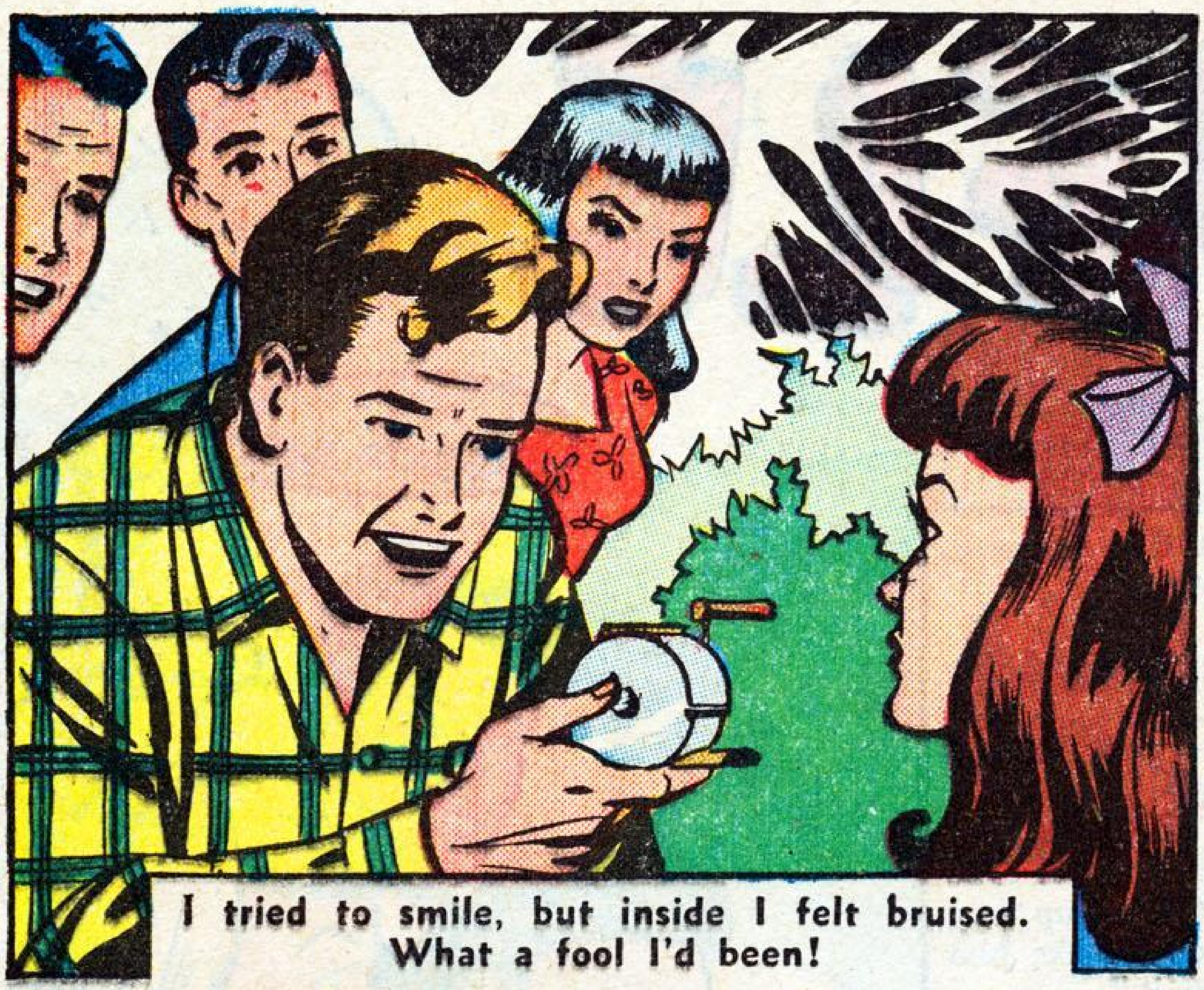
"Dennis would look good any place," I insisted. "Besides, I'm through being the athletic type. I want some advice about my hair, and I want to get some frilly clothes . . ."

Sally's parents had let her invite our crowd, ten of us altogether, out to spend a long week-end vacation from school on their huge ranch. Dennis accepted immediately, and when he heard that he was to be my partner, he telephoned me. "It sounds perfect," he said. "I can hardly wait." And, of course, I could hardly wait myself.

The first morning at the ranch Dennis appeared

The pony gave a gentle buck, and Dennis landed in the dust.

By PAT PAIGE



I tried to smile, but inside I felt bruised. What a fool I'd been!

dressed in a pair of shiny riding boots and immaculate whipcord breeches. The others looked at him and then at each other. Laughing, he gallantly pinned a spray of wisteria in my hair, then breathed deep and thumped his chest.

" 'Give a man a horse he can ride'," he quoted, climbing onto the nearest pony. The pony gave a gentle buck, and Dennis landed in the dust. I ran to him, but I noticed that the others were watching to see his reaction. "I guess that's a horse a man *can't* ride," he said. Everyone joined his laughter, and I breathed easier. They were going to like him.

Uncle George and Aunt Alice had arranged for us to spend the day fishing. They made an occasion of it by offering a prize of a wonderful fishing reel to the person who caught the largest trout. Dennis' pony was not very fast, and on the way to the lake we lagged behind. This was the first chance I'd had to talk to him alone.

"New York must be awfully exciting," I said. "Broadway, the museums, night clubs—all this must seem dull to you."

"I wouldn't trade a day out here for a year in town," he said. "Just smell that fresh air. Look at that scenery. This is the most exciting time of my life!" And he made me talk about ranching.

Near the lake we suddenly came upon Guffy Clagg, an old woodsman I'd known for years. He was carrying a rifle and he was accompanied by several dogs. He whooped jovially when he saw us. "Little Dotty Harrigan! S'help me, you get purtier every time I see you!"

I could have kissed his stubbly old chin. From the corner of my eye I saw Dennis studying me closely, probably trying to think of me as pretty. "What are you after with that old shootin' iron, Guffy?" I asked.

"Mountain lion," he said. "Big cat around here's been killin' cattle."

"Dangerous to hunt a lion alone, isn't it?"

Guffy only laughed. He was looking at Dennis, taking in the fancy clothes. I made the introductions.

"City slicker, huh?" Guffy said to Dennis.

"No, sir," Dennis answered. "Tenderfoot."

Guffy's eyebrows rose. "Well, I reckon that isn't a sin."

"It's not a sin. It's a discomfort!" Dennis stood up in the stirrups and rubbed his posterior.

Guffy grinned, and I could have hugged Dennis. He had said exactly the right thing.

At the lake Dennis rowed our boat well. "Learned it in Central Park," he explained, and I began to feel proud of him even if he was a tenderfoot.

But he knew nothing about casting. I stood behind him, held his wrists and showed him how to handle the fishing rod. He practiced over and over. When he finally caught a fish, he was like a small boy with a new toy. By the end of the afternoon he had caught three. I had fourteen, and one of them was an unusually fine trout. Something had to be done, so when Dennis wasn't looking, I exchanged one of the fish in his creel for my prize catch.

We baked our fish that night in the coals of a campfire on the ranch house grounds. Afterward Aunt Alice made an announcement. "Boys and girls," she said, "you'll be happy—and surprised—to learn that the prize goes to Dennis. His trout was the largest in the day's catch."

Dennis seemed dazed as he accepted the reel amid shouts and applause from the others. "Speech, speech!" they yelled.

I squeezed his hand encouragingly, but he frowned perplexedly at me. Then he rose. "Friends," he began, "having lived on a diet of soot and gas fumes all my life, I find many things surprising out here. But, more than the fresh air, the peace and quiet, the scenery and the saddle sores, the kindness and generosity of the people impress me most.

"For instance, I caught three fish today. They were small fish, but I'm proud of them because they were the first I ever caught. Good ol' Dots here, when she thought I wasn't looking, put the biggest of her catch into my creel. I know she did it to make me feel at home, and I'm touched by it, but *she* really won the prize. I guess I'm happy enough about those three little fish I caught without getting a prize for one I didn't. Therefore, I'm going to give this reel to your pal and mine—*Dots Harrigan!*" He laid the reel in my lap while the others applauded madly.

I tried to smile, but inside I felt bruised. What a fool I'd been! I'd wanted to make him feel proud so he wouldn't — well, admire my abilities so much, the way the other boys did. Instead, I'd really belittled and embarrassed him. Guffy had appeared while Dennis was talking, and now Dennis left me to talk to the old woodsman. I slipped away and sat by myself under a cottonwood tree.

A bit later I felt a hand on my shoulder. "Can that be my Dots Harrigan, sittin' there weeping?" Guffy said.

"Guffy," I said, "maybe I'm useful on a ranch, but with romance I'm terrible." I told him about Dennis. When I was through, he nodded. "You made him feel somewhat less than a man, and it's natural if he resents it. Seems like a nice young fella though. Tell you what. Remember that mountain lion I mentioned this morning?"

I nodded.

"Nobody knows it, but that lion's tame. I found it when it was a kitten and raised it. That cat is as gentle as your mother with human beings, but she doesn't have the same idea with cattle. She's taken to wanderin' off several days at a time. I've got to shoot her. Hardest job I ever had to do. I tracked her down today, and I know she's up in Chicken Canyon. It got dark before I could get her.

"Now, I talked to your Uncle George, and tomorrow we're taking you kids to hunt that lion. I'll lead the others away from that canyon, and you and Dennis go in there. Let him shoot the lion. It'll be easy, and the boy'll think he's got a real wild beast and so will everyone else. That'll give him respect for himself and get him respect from the others. And it should answer your problem."

This time I did kiss Guffy on his stubbly chin. "It's a deal," I said hopefully.

Next morning I found that Dennis had been up two hours ahead of the rest of us, practicing with a rifle. On the trail he was happy and excited about the hunt. He talked to me as though he had forgotten about last night.

The party stopped at the entrance to Chicken Canyon, and, as we'd planned, Guffy said he was sure the trail led to the north while I argued that it led into the canyon. Finally Guffy told Dennis and me to take two dogs and search the canyon, and the others went on with him.

When we were alone, we put our horses to a gallop. I thought I knew where the lion would be—at the end of the canyon in a thick clump of trees. As we approached the woods, I knew I was right. The dogs grew excited, and the horses were definitely nervous. Finally, we dismounted and went along cautiously on foot. Signs of the big cat were unmistakable now. I showed Dennis how to stalk, and we proceeded quickly and silently. We came suddenly upon a half-eaten heifer. The dogs trembled with fear and excitement.

Half an hour later I suddenly grasped Dennis' arm and pulled him down behind a tree. We peered around it warily, and I pointed. On a low branch about twenty yards across a clearing, crouched the lion—silent, motionless as a taut spring. Then his tail began to switch, and the dogs started to whimper.

"Quickly," I whispered, "take the first shot. Try to get it behind his ear. Be calm and take careful aim."

Dennis lay on his stomach and aimed with steady hands. A sudden crash from his rifle—and with a frightening roar, the lion leaped. On the ground he stumbled and rolled over, but he instantly got up and bounded into a clump of brush, growling with pain and rage.

Dennis and I jumped up now, trembling. "The poor thing!" Dennis exclaimed. "I've only hurt it!" With that he sprinted toward the brush.

For a second I was paralyzed with fear. A wounded mountain lion is frightfully dangerous. I prayed that this one still trusted men enough to hesitate—at least long enough for me to get there. I tore after Dennis, my own rifle ready, expecting each second to see the great beast leap out on him. But before I got to the brush, Dennis fired twice again. The roaring stopped.

"I guess he's finished now," Dennis said softly. I approached cautiously. The lion was dead. I breathed a great sigh and sank to the ground, shaking. Dennis looked at me in surprise. "An expert woodswoman like you, *scared?*"

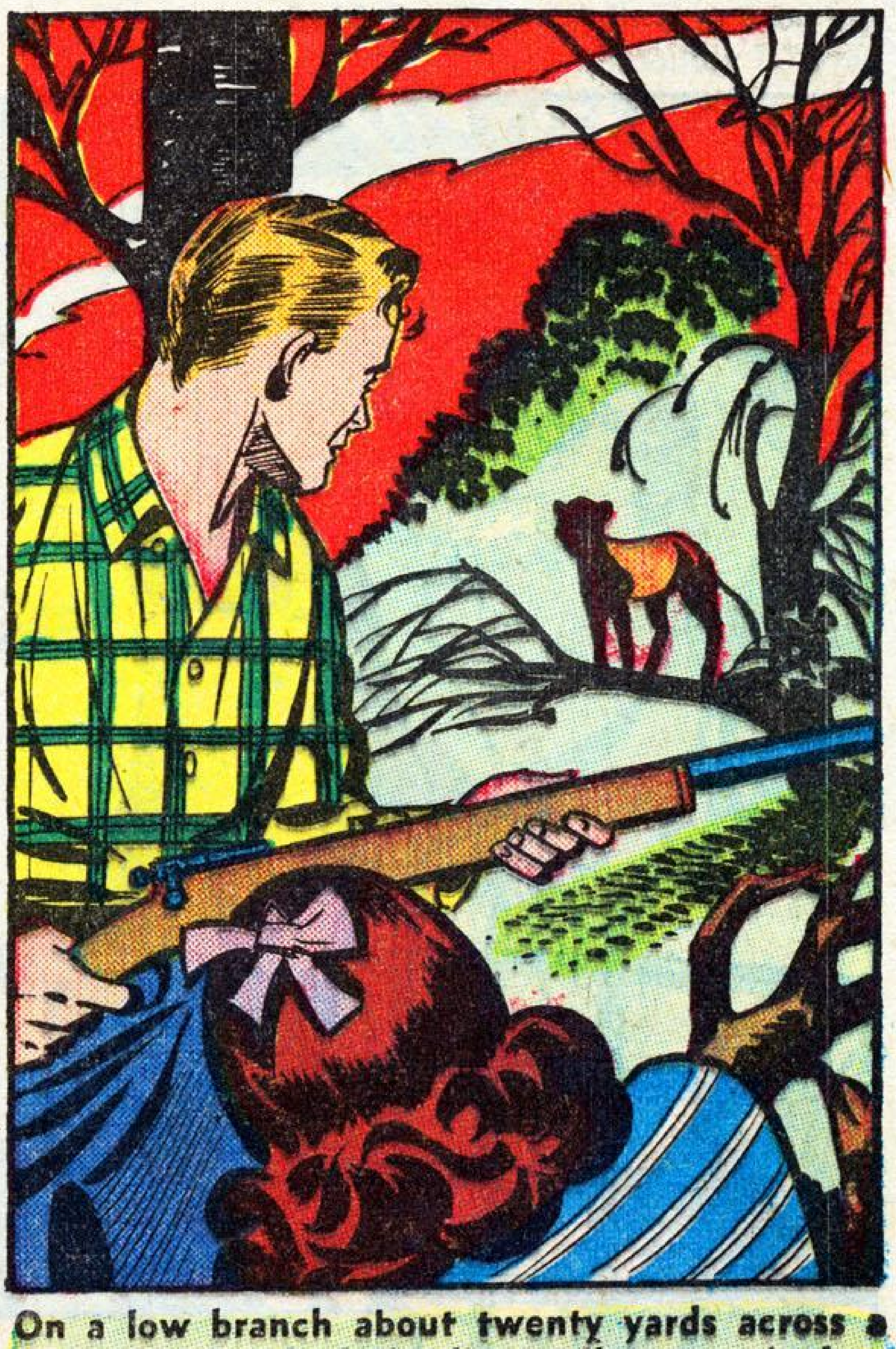
"You don't realize what you've accomplished," I said.

He considered this. "I guess I was too dumb to be afraid," he said finally.

"Your shooting was perfect," I insisted.

"Sheer luck," he shrugged, but then be brightened. "Wait till my friends back East hear about this!"

I got up then, and we brought the horses in. I cut two long poles which I made into an Indian travois, and we tied the lion's carcass into it.



On a low branch about twenty yards across a clearing, crouched the lion—silent, motionless as a taut spring.

On the way back Dennis' chest seemed to expand a couple of inches. "We ought to form a partnership, Dots," he said. "You track 'em, and I shoot 'em. Could we make a living hunting mountain lions?"

Suddenly I felt gloriously happy. Guffy's plan had worked. Dennis was a tenderfoot, but he was also a good sport. He was the one boy I'd met who didn't feel embarrassed with a girl because she was athletic. And now he'd proven himself to himself, and his happiness made my heart go out to him. What if the lion was tame? *He* didn't know it, and I promised myself that, to my dying day, he'd never learn that it had been anything less than the most ferocious beast in America. "It's not a practical way to make a living," I said, "but it would certainly be an exciting life."

Back at the ranch the others had not yet returned. The ranch hands gathered in awe around our lion and solemnly shook Dennis' hand and congratulated him.

It was almost nightfall when Guffy's party appeared. I ran to the gate to meet them. Guffy climbed off his pony and put a hand on my shoulder. "Dots, I'm sorry," he said. "I could've sworn that cat of mine would be in Chicken Canyon, but we found her up on Feather Mountain. Your uncle shot her."

The others came up, and I saw the carcass of another mountain lion, this one smaller and a female. Suddenly my knees began to shake, and I grabbed the horn of Guffy's saddle. "L-l-look at what Dennis shot," I stuttered.

Guffy looked. He gulped his quid of tobacco. "Great jumpin' Jupiter!" he said. "*Of course!* That big male is the reason why poor little Dusty was spending her nights out. *He* killed those heifers! Did you say *Dennis* got him?"

I nodded.

"Great jumpin' Jupiter!" he repeated.

Dennis came up. He looked at both of us. Then he saw the lion. His legs seemed to give away, and he also grabbed onto Guffy's saddle. That's *your* mountain lion?" he said to Guffy.

Guffy nodded.

"Then the one I shot was *not* your tame beast?"

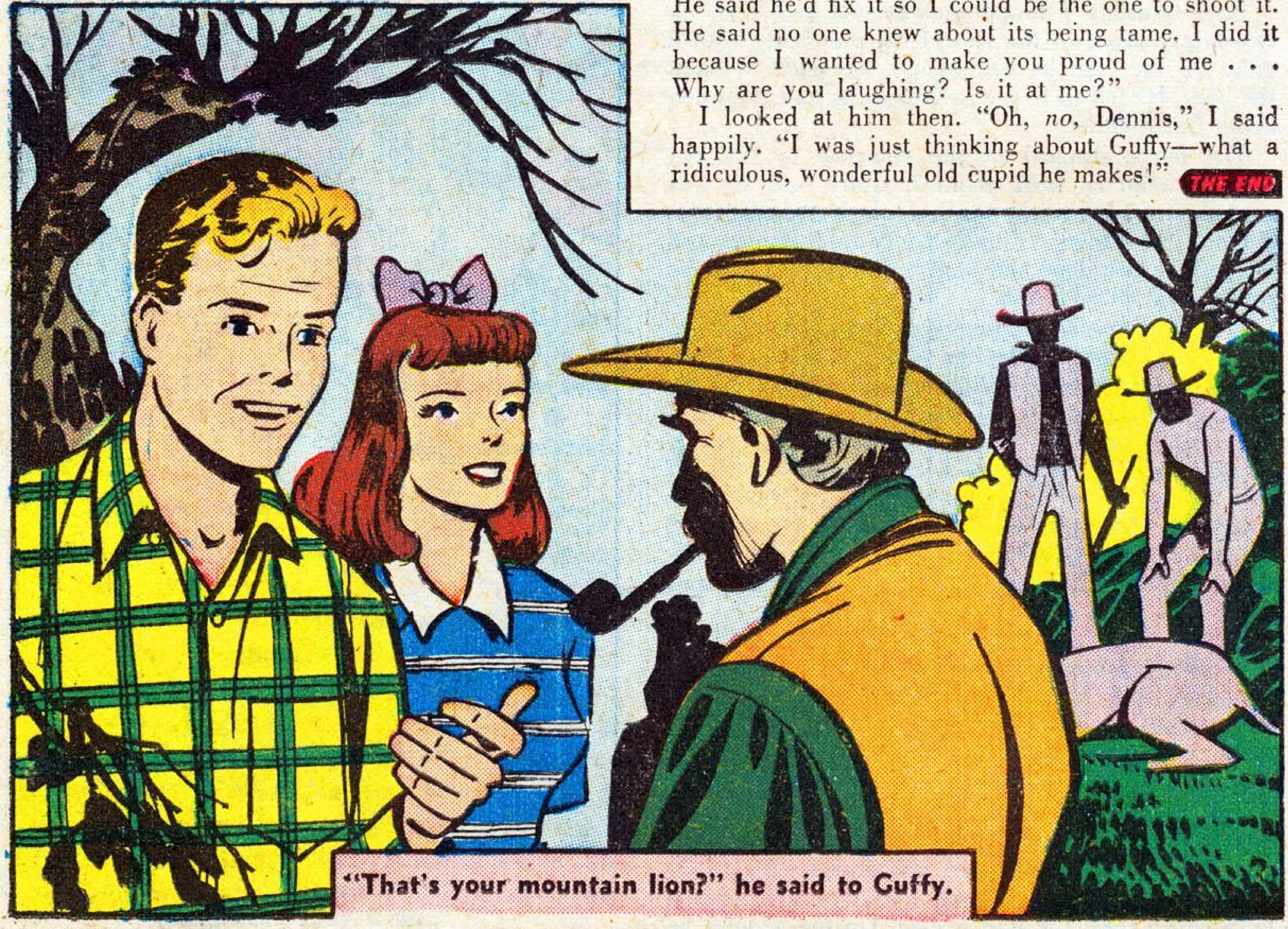
It took a second for the shock of this to stun me. Dennis somehow *knew* about Guffy's tame lion. I had done it again. I had failed, and this time it was infinitely worse. Dennis would hate me. Somehow I couldn't bear to see the look I knew would be in his eyes. I ran to my pony, jumped on it and rode swiftly into the brush. The wind whistled in my ears and whipped the tears from my eyes.

When I finally stopped, I heard a shout. A moment later Dennis galloped up and jumped down beside me. "Dots, listen to me," he begged. "I know I did a despicable thing. You must *loathe* me, but I have to explain."

I still couldn't look at him.

"Last night I told Guffy I liked a girl who was good at sports, and I asked him what I should do to make her respect me. He told me about his tame lion. He said he'd fix it so I could be the one to shoot it. He said no one knew about its being tame. I did it because I wanted to make you proud of me . . . Why are you laughing? Is it at me?"

I looked at him then. "Oh, *no*, Dennis," I said happily. "I was just thinking about Guffy—what a ridiculous, wonderful old cupid he makes!" THE END



"That's your mountain lion?" he said to Guffy.

FOOD FOR FUN

MEATLESS MEALS . . .

Here are several ideas for those days you want to experiment with meals minus meat!

First, try a vegetable plate, which is always a tasty and nourishing main dish.

Put a big baked potato in the middle of the platter and surround it with little heaps of buttered beets, emerald green beans, delicately cooked spinach, topped with a riced hard-boiled egg, some pearly little onions and yellow carrot balls. The vegetables should be dressed with a little butter, pepper and salt and sprinkled with minced parsley. As pretty a dish as it is tasty — and mighty filling.

And how about a molded cheese salad? Soak 1½ tablespoons of plain gelatin in a little cold water. Then set the container in hot water and stir until the gelatin dissolves. Mix together half a cup of chopped stuffed olives, half a cup of minced celery, half a cup of grated raw carrot, a cup of grated cabbage, a cup of chopped nut meats and one tomato, chopped and drained. Blend two packages of cream cheese with half a cup of cream, and season with salt, pepper and paprika — a teaspoonful. Beat until smooth.

Add the gelatin to the vegetables, combined with the cheese mixture, and turn into a mold. Set in the refrigerator until firm, and then serve with Russian dressing.

Another scrumptious meat substitute is a rather unusual spaghetti dish. Cook half a pound of spaghetti in salted boiling water until it's tender. Shred a cabbage, drop it into salted boiling water and cook for seven minutes at a full boil. Drain. Blend two tablespoons of butter with three tablespoons of flour, add 1½ cups of water with 1½ cups of unsweetened, evaporated milk, and cook for 15 minutes in a double boiler.

Add half a pound of cheese, cut into pieces, and cook at a low heat until the cheese is melted. Then add the cooked cabbage and drained spaghetti to the cheese and white sauce, and turn into a casserole. Cover with bread crumbs, dot with butter and bake in a hot oven for about 20 minutes or a little less.

Any of these recipes are certain to bring three cheers from your family!

MAYONNAISE MAGIC . . .

If you're planning a buffet party soon and you'll be using a lot of mayonnaise in sandwiches or salads, you might like to whip up a batch of this special mayonnaise that's designed especially to hold over a good period of time. But remember, as with any egg dressing, you must keep it cold and not too long.

In a bowl mix two tablespoons of sugar, one tablespoon of mustard, one teaspoon of salt and a big pinch of cayenne. Without stirring, add a cup of good olive oil and one unbeaten egg. Let these stand.

Meanwhile, put ¼ of a cup of cornstarch into a small pan. Add smoothly ¼ of a cup cold water and then one cup of boiling water. Stir over a high heat until the mixture looks transparent. Then add it to the egg-oil-dry mixture, and beat rapidly with an egg beater. When the mixture thickens and is velvety, beat in two tablespoons of vinegar and three tablespoons of lemon juice. Chill until needed.

It's sure to give that extra touch to any ordinary salad!

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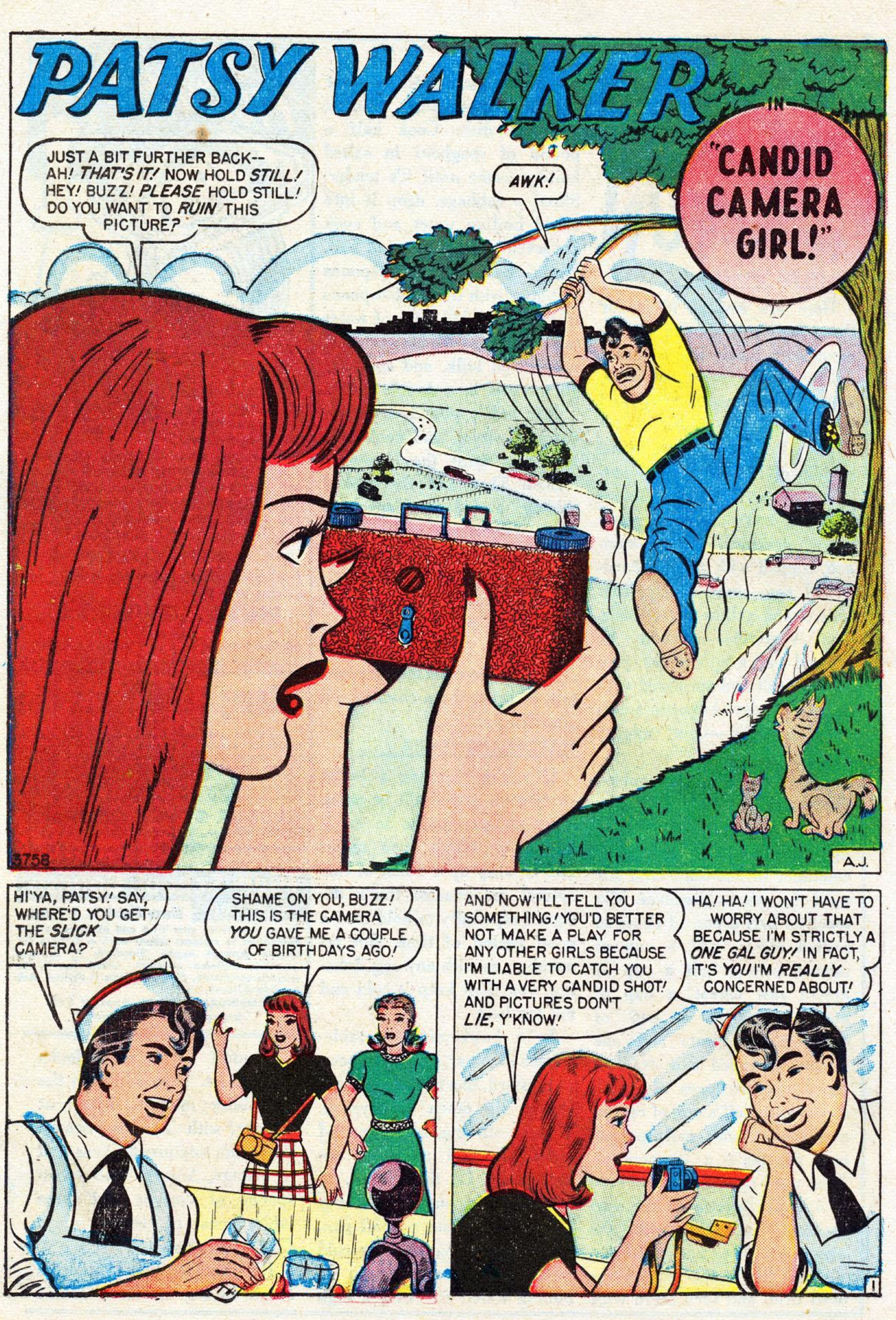
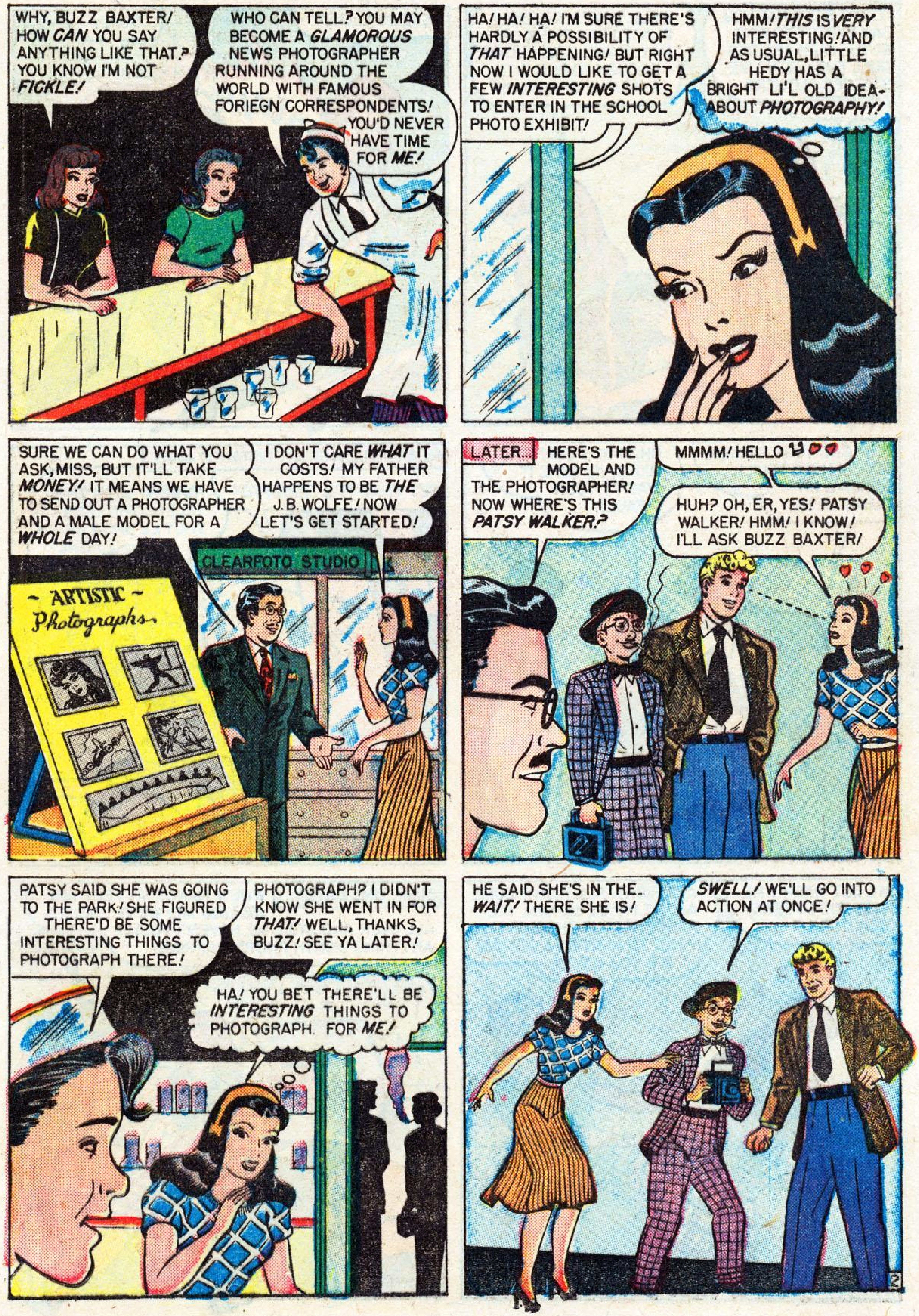
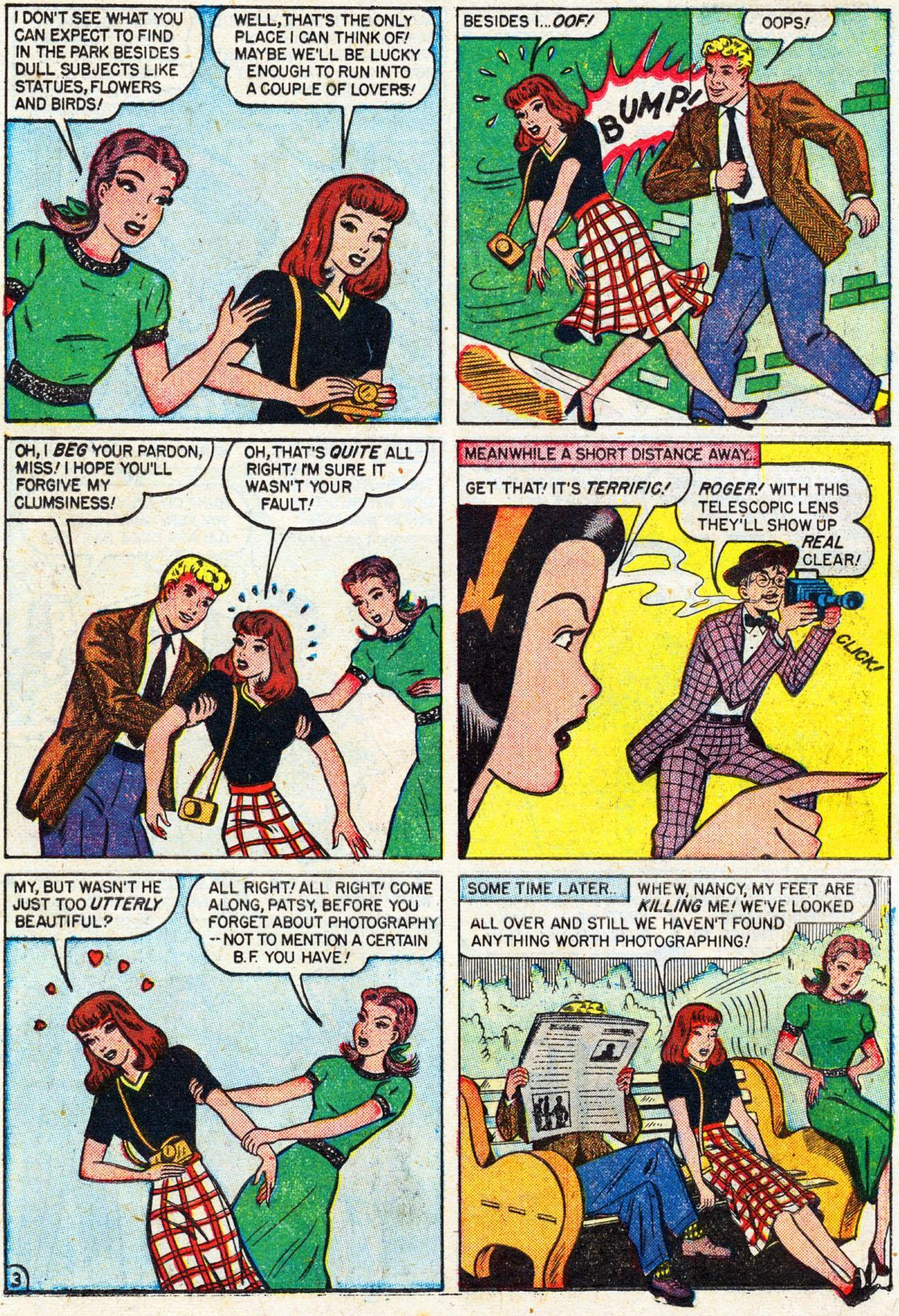
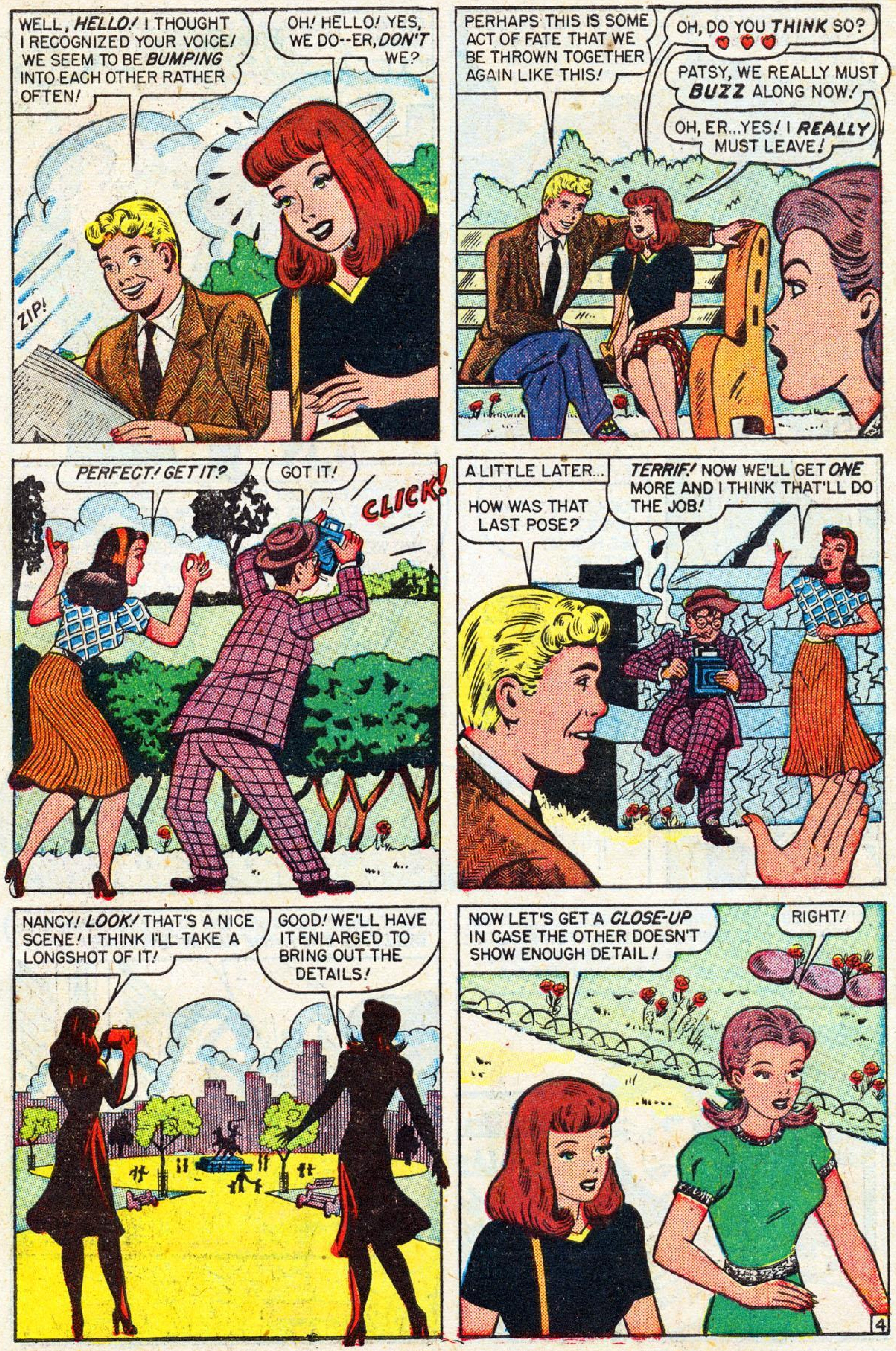
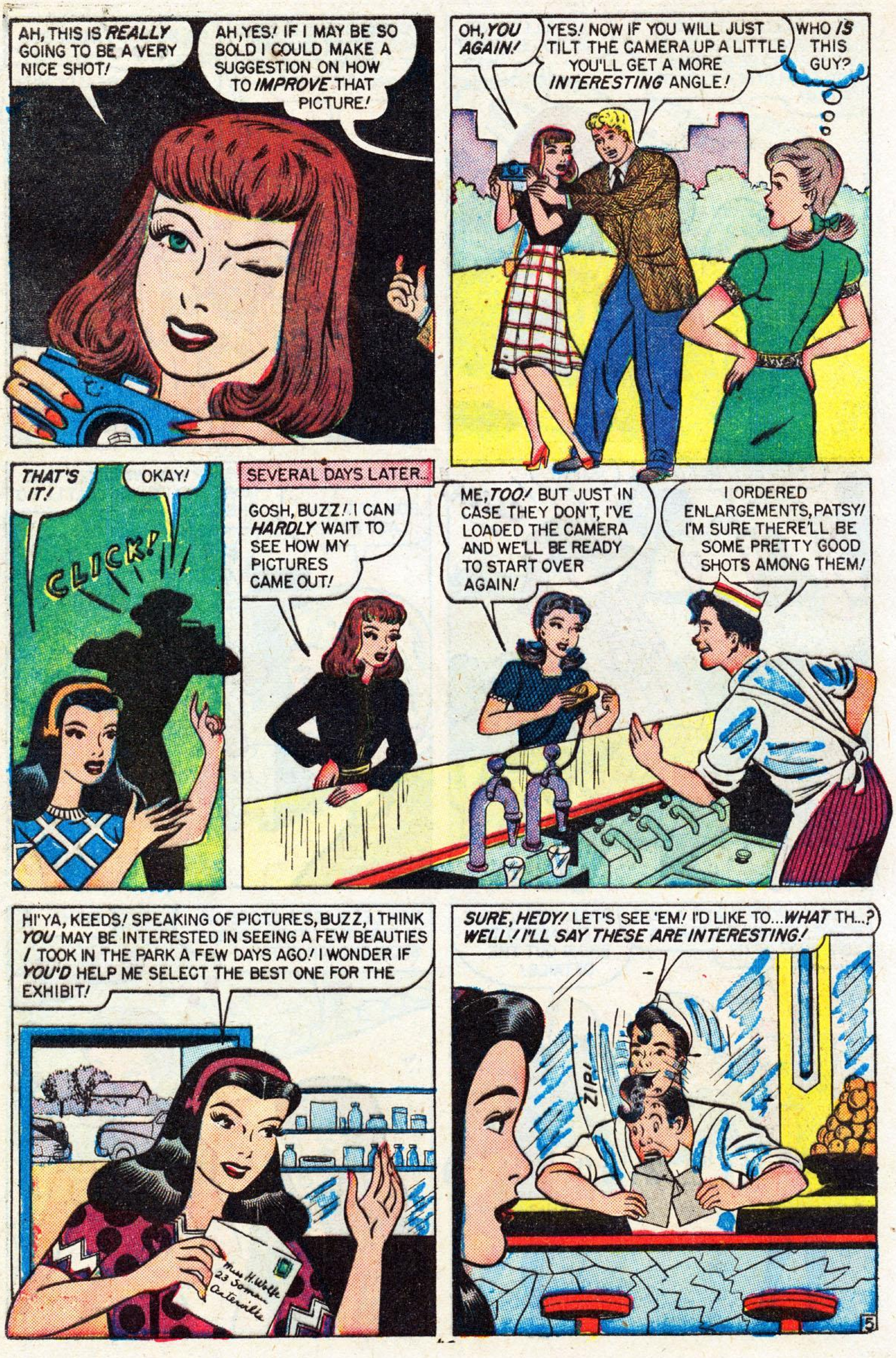
PATSY WALKER IN "CANDID CAMERA GIRL!"

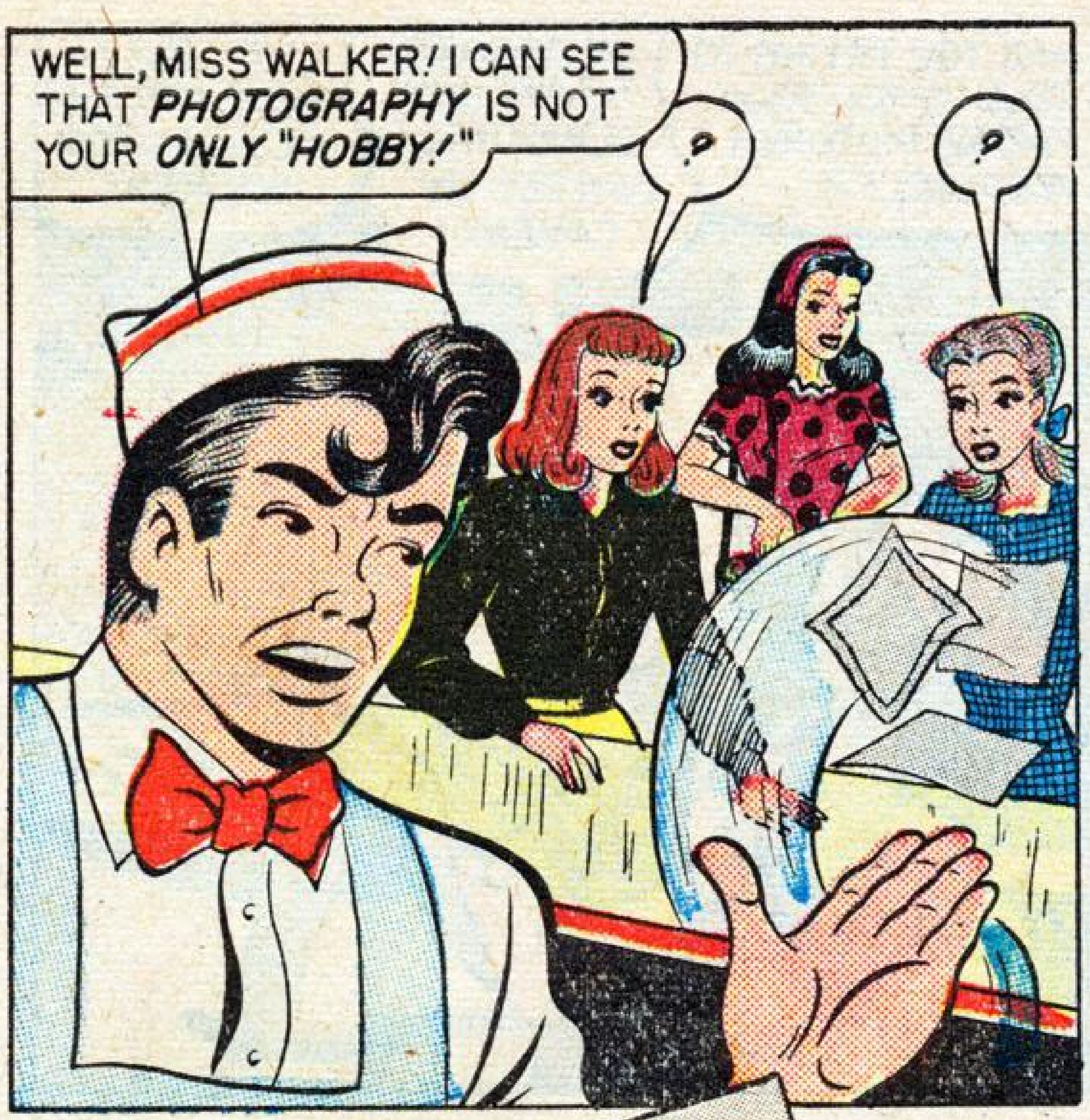

JUST A BIT FURTHER BACK-- AH! *THAT'S IT!* NOW HOLD *STILL!* HEY! BUZZ! *PLEASE* HOLD STILL! DO YOU WANT TO *RUIN* THIS PICTURE?
AWK!
3758
A.J.
HI'YA, PATSY! SAY, WHERE'D YOU GET THE *SLICK* CAMERA?
SHAME ON YOU, BUZZ! THIS IS THE CAMERA *YOU* GAVE ME A COUPLE OF BIRTHDAYS AGO!
AND NOW I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING! YOU'D BETTER NOT MAKE A PLAY FOR ANY OTHER GIRLS BECAUSE I'M LIABLE TO CATCH YOU WITH A VERY CANDID SHOT! AND PICTURES DON'T *LIE*, Y'KNOW!
HA! HA! I WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT BECAUSE I'M STRICTLY A *ONE GAL GUY!* IN FACT, IT'S *YOU* I'M *REALLY* CONCERNED ABOUT!
1

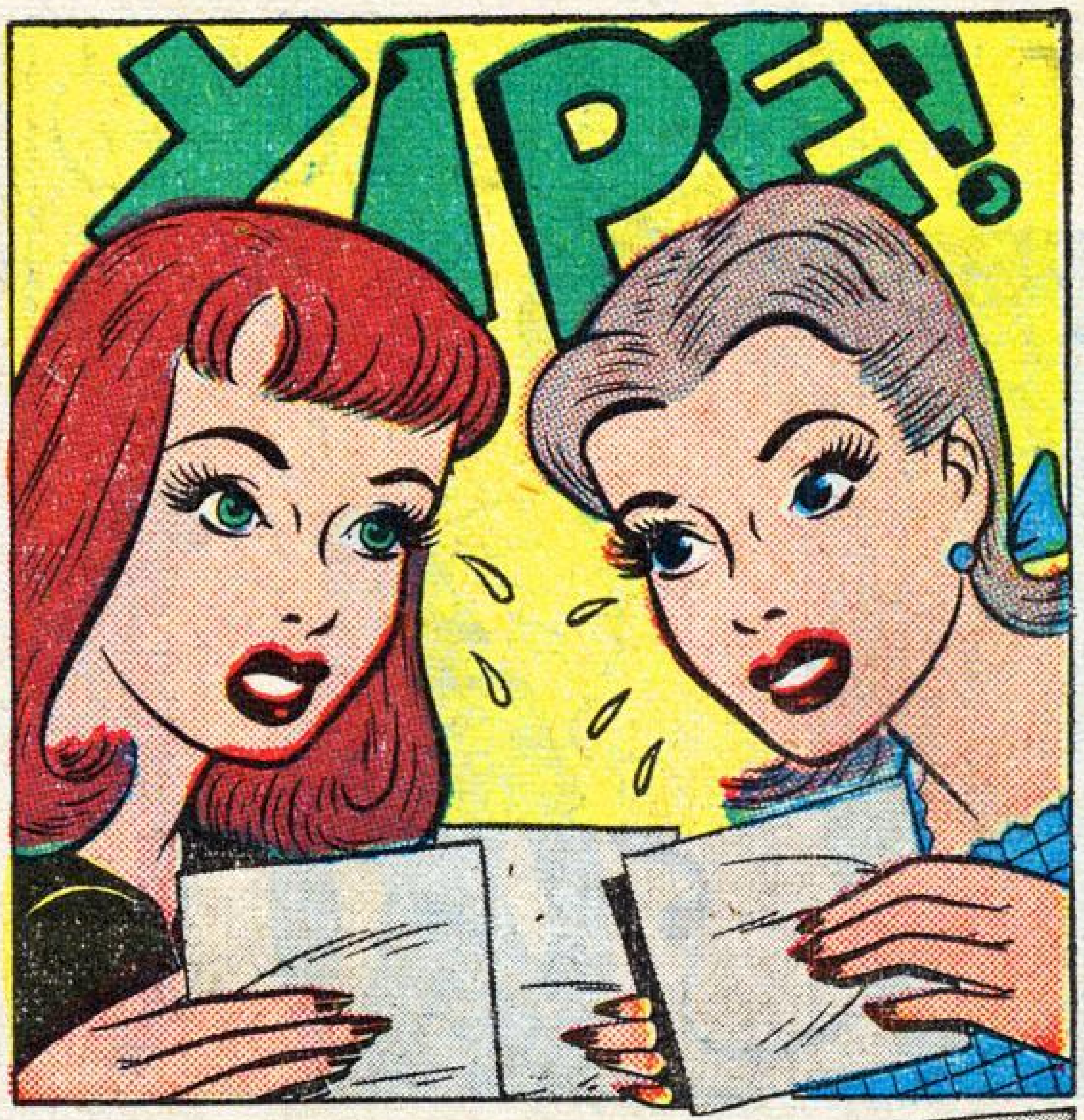

WHY, BUZZ BAXTER! HOW *CAN* YOU SAY ANYTHING LIKE THAT? YOU KNOW I'M NOT *FICKLE!*
WHO CAN TELL? YOU MAY BECOME A *GLAMOROUS* NEWS PHOTOGRAPHER RUNNING AROUND THE WORLD WITH FAMOUS FORIEGN CORRESPONDENTS! YOU'D NEVER HAVE TIME FOR *ME!*
HA! HA! HA! I'M SURE THERE'S HARDLY A POSSIBILITY OF *THAT* HAPPENING! BUT RIGHT NOW I WOULD LIKE TO GET A FEW *INTERESTING* SHOTS TO ENTER IN THE SCHOOL PHOTO EXHIBIT!
HMM! *THIS* IS *VERY* INTERESTING! AND AS USUAL, LITTLE HEDY HAS A BRIGHT LI'L OLD IDEA ABOUT *PHOTOGRAPHY!*
SURE WE CAN DO WHAT YOU ASK, MISS, BUT IT'LL TAKE *MONEY!* IT MEANS WE HAVE TO SEND OUT A PHOTOGRAPHER AND A MALE MODEL FOR A *WHOLE* DAY!
I DON'T CARE *WHAT* IT COSTS! MY FATHER HAPPENS TO BE *THE* J.B. WOLFE! NOW LET'S GET STARTED!
CLEARFOTO STUDIO
~ ARTISTIC ~ Photographs
LATER...
HERE'S THE MODEL AND THE PHOTOGRAPHER! NOW WHERE'S THIS *PATSY WALKER?*
MMMM! HELLO ♥♥
HUH? OH, ER, YES! PATSY WALKER! HMM! I KNOW! I'LL ASK BUZZ BAXTER!
PATSY SAID SHE WAS GOING TO THE PARK! SHE FIGURED THERE'D BE SOME INTERESTING THINGS TO PHOTOGRAPH THERE!
PHOTOGRAPH? I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WENT IN FOR *THAT!* WELL, THANKS, BUZZ! SEE YA LATER!
HA! YOU BET THERE'LL BE *INTERESTING* THINGS TO PHOTOGRAPH. FOR *ME!*
HE SAID SHE'S IN THE... *WAIT!* THERE SHE IS!
SWELL! WE'LL GO INTO ACTION AT ONCE!
2

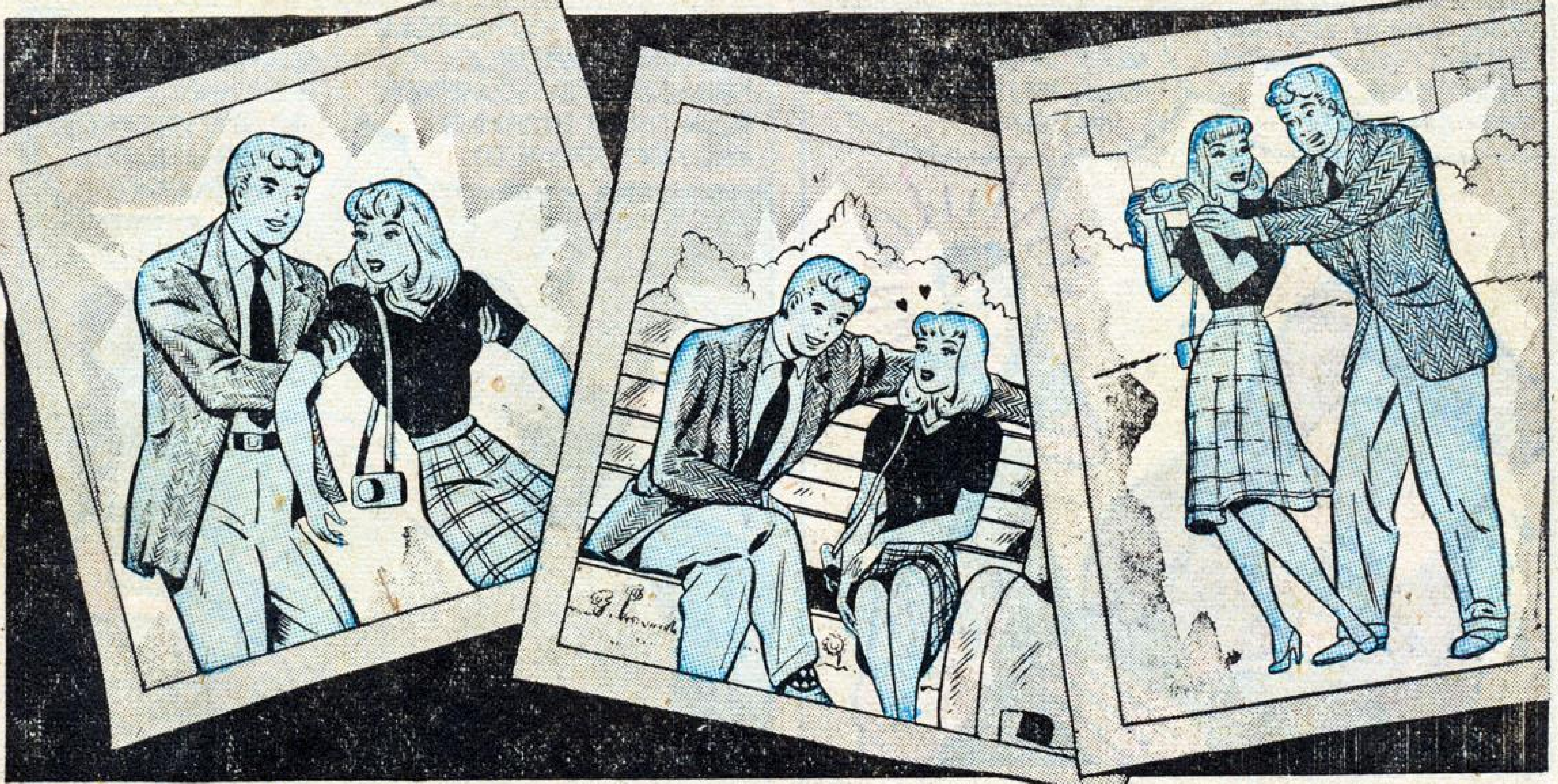

I DON'T SEE WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO FIND IN THE PARK BESIDES DULL SUBJECTS LIKE STATUES, FLOWERS AND BIRDS!
WELL, THAT'S THE ONLY PLACE I CAN THINK OF! MAYBE WE'LL BE LUCKY ENOUGH TO RUN INTO A COUPLE OF LOVERS!
BESIDES I...*OOF!*
OOPS!
BUMP!
OH, I *BEG* YOUR PARDON, MISS! I HOPE YOU'LL FORGIVE MY CLUMSINESS!
OH, THAT'S *QUITE* ALL RIGHT! I'M SURE IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT!
MEANWHILE A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY...
GET THAT! IT'S *TERRIFIC!*
ROGER! WITH THIS TELESCOPIC LENS THEY'LL SHOW UP *REAL* CLEAR!
CLICK!
MY, BUT WASN'T HE JUST TOO *UTTERLY* BEAUTIFUL?
ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! COME ALONG, PATSY, BEFORE YOU FORGET ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY -- NOT TO MENTION A CERTAIN B.F. YOU HAVE!
3
SOME TIME LATER.
WHEW, NANCY, MY FEET ARE *KILLING* ME! WE'VE LOOKED ALL OVER AND STILL WE HAVEN'T FOUND ANYTHING WORTH PHOTOGRAPHING!

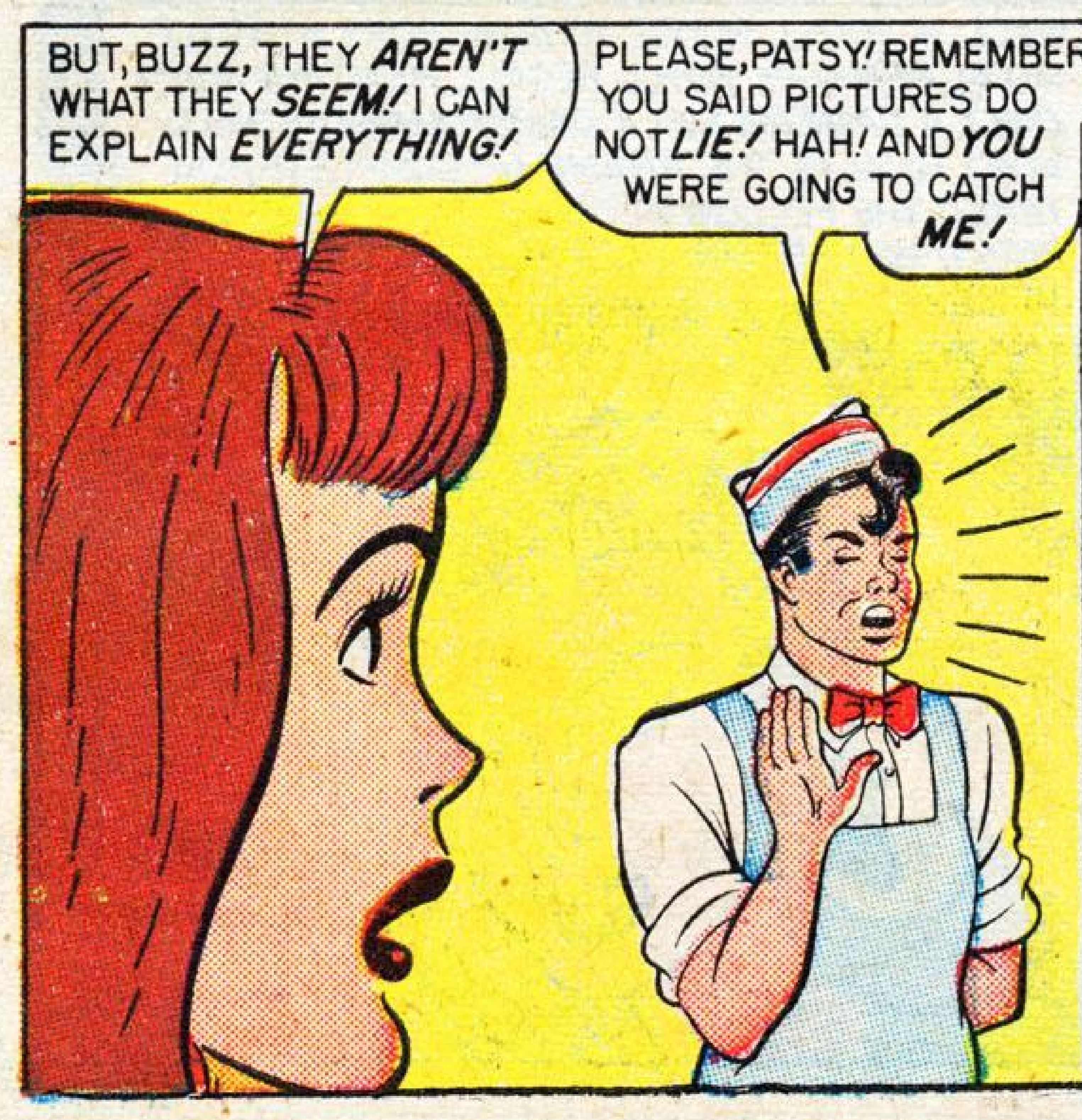

WELL, *HELLO!* I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED YOUR VOICE! WE SEEM TO BE *BUMPING* INTO EACH OTHER RATHER OFTEN!
OH! HELLO! YES, WE DO--ER, *DON'T* WE?
ZIP!
PERHAPS THIS IS SOME ACT OF FATE THAT WE BE THROWN TOGETHER AGAIN LIKE THIS!
OH, DO YOU ***THINK*** SO? ♥♥♥
PATSY, WE REALLY MUST ***BUZZ*** ALONG NOW!
OH, ER...YES! I ***REALLY*** MUST LEAVE!
PERFECT! GET IT?
GOT IT!
CLICK!
A LITTLE LATER...
HOW WAS THAT LAST POSE?
TERRIF! NOW WE'LL GET *ONE* MORE AND I THINK THAT'LL DO THE JOB!
NANCY! *LOOK!* THAT'S A NICE SCENE! I THINK I'LL TAKE A LONGSHOT OF IT!
GOOD! WE'LL HAVE IT ENLARGED TO BRING OUT THE DETAILS!
NOW LET'S GET A *CLOSE-UP* IN CASE THE OTHER DOESN'T SHOW ENOUGH DETAIL!
RIGHT!

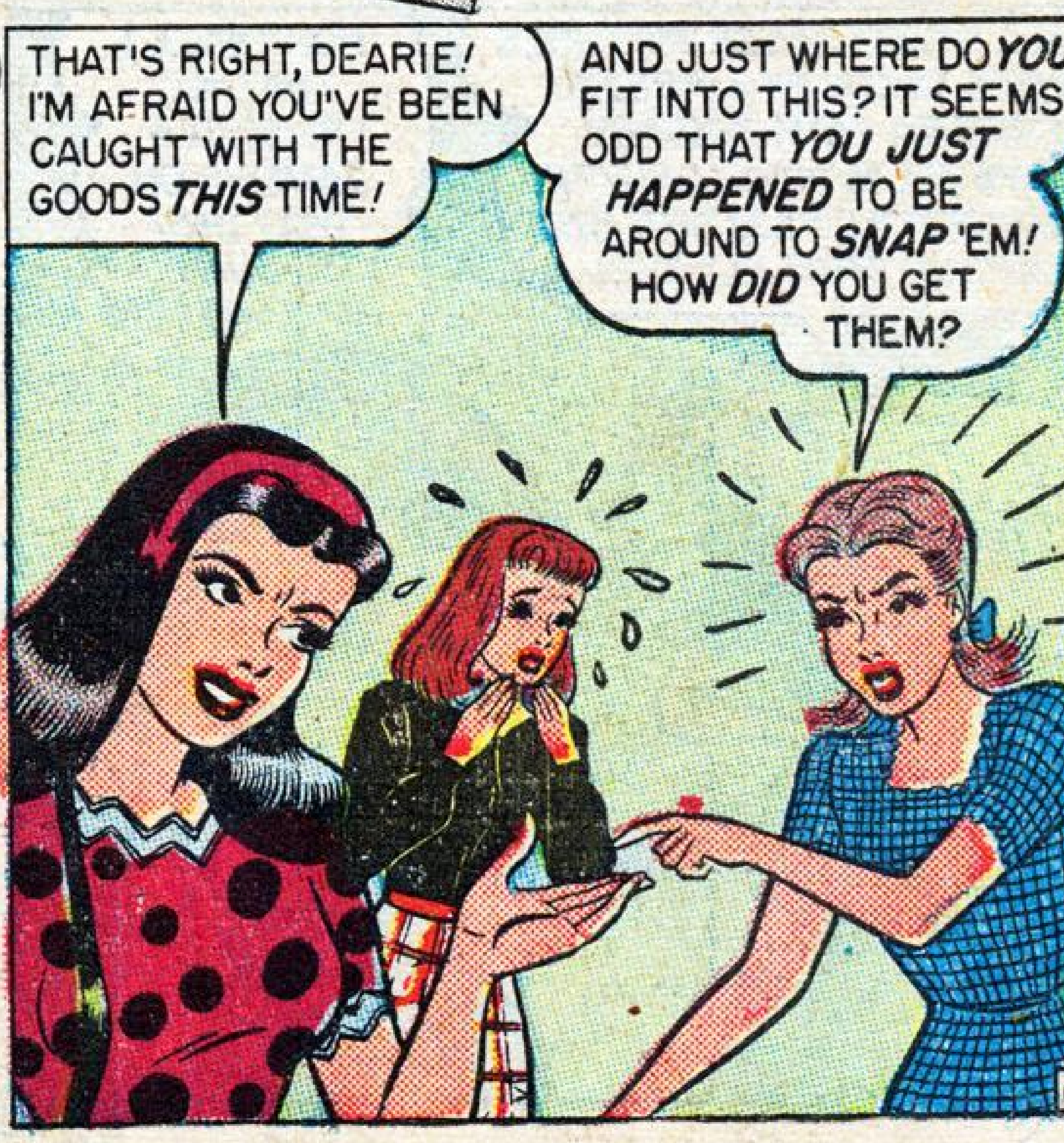

AH, THIS IS *REALLY* GOING TO BE A VERY NICE SHOT!
AH, YES! IF I MAY BE SO BOLD I COULD MAKE A SUGGESTION ON HOW TO *IMPROVE* THAT PICTURE!
OH, *YOU AGAIN!*
YES! NOW IF YOU WILL JUST TILT THE CAMERA UP A LITTLE YOU'LL GET A MORE *INTERESTING* ANGLE!
WHO *IS* THIS GUY?
THAT'S IT!
OKAY!
CLICK!
SEVERAL DAYS LATER...
GOSH, BUZZ! I CAN *HARDLY* WAIT TO SEE HOW MY PICTURES CAME OUT!
ME, *TOO!* BUT JUST IN CASE THEY DON'T, I'VE LOADED THE CAMERA AND WE'LL BE READY TO START OVER AGAIN!
I ORDERED ENLARGEMENTS, PATSY! I'M SURE THERE'LL BE SOME PRETTY GOOD SHOTS AMONG THEM!
HI'YA, KEEDS! SPEAKING OF PICTURES, BUZZ, I THINK *YOU* MAY BE INTERESTED IN SEEING A FEW BEAUTIES *I* TOOK IN THE PARK A FEW DAYS AGO! I WONDER IF *YOU'D* HELP ME SELECT THE BEST ONE FOR THE EXHIBIT!
Miss H. Wolfe
23 Soman
Centerville
SURE, HEDY! LET'S SEE 'EM! I'D LIKE TO... *WHAT* TH...? *WELL! I'LL SAY THESE ARE INTERESTING!*
ZIP!

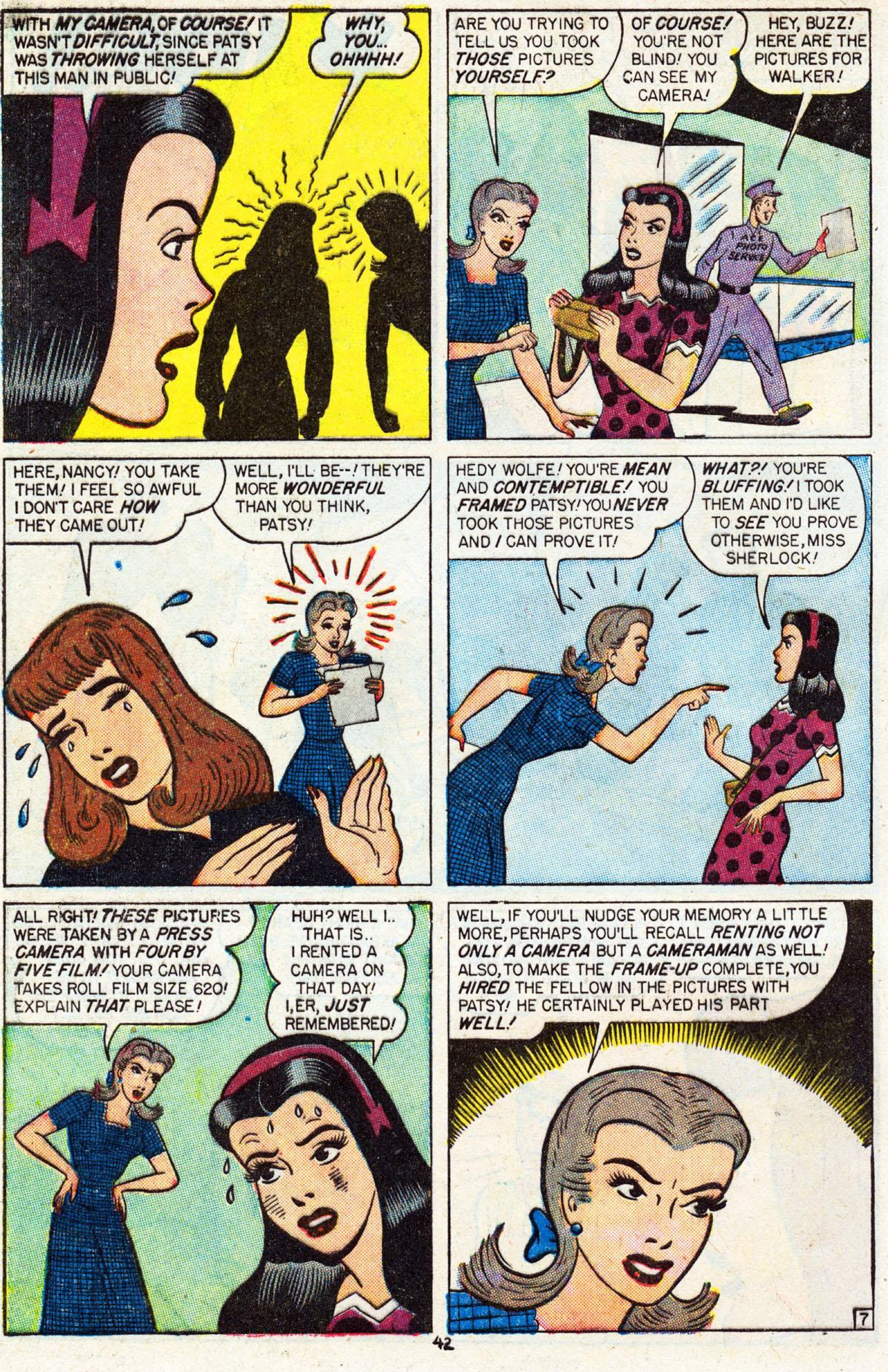

WELL, MISS WALKER! I CAN SEE THAT *PHOTOGRAPHY* IS NOT YOUR *ONLY "HOBBY!"*
?
?

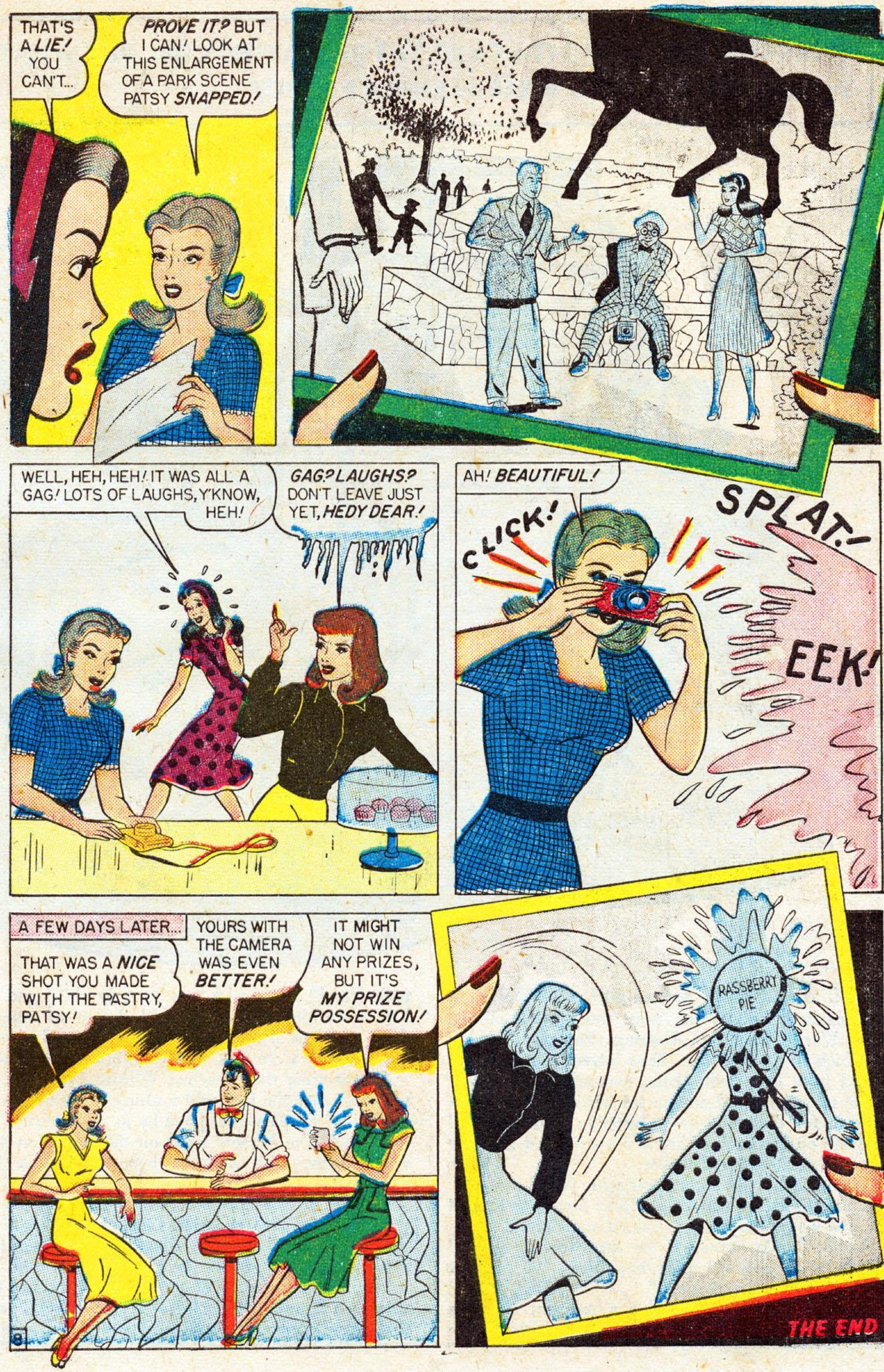

YIPE!




BUT, BUZZ, THEY *AREN'T* WHAT THEY *SEEM!* I CAN EXPLAIN *EVERYTHING!*
PLEASE, PATSY! REMEMBER, YOU SAID PICTURES DO NOT *LIE!* HAH! AND *YOU* WERE GOING TO CATCH *ME!*


THAT'S RIGHT, DEARIE! I'M AFRAID YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT WITH THE GOODS *THIS* TIME!
AND JUST WHERE DO *YOU* FIT INTO THIS? IT SEEMS ODD THAT *YOU JUST HAPPENED* TO BE AROUND TO *SNAP* 'EM! HOW *DID* YOU GET THEM?


WITH MY CAMERA, OF COURSE! IT WASN'T DIFFICULT, SINCE PATSY WAS THROWING HERSELF AT THIS MAN IN PUBLIC!
WHY, YOU... OHHHH!
ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL US YOU TOOK THOSE PICTURES YOURSELF?
OF COURSE! YOU'RE NOT BLIND! YOU CAN SEE MY CAMERA!
HEY, BUZZ! HERE ARE THE PICTURES FOR WALKER!
ACE PHOTO SERVICE
HERE, NANCY! YOU TAKE THEM! I FEEL SO AWFUL I DON'T CARE HOW THEY CAME OUT!
WELL, I'LL BE--! THEY'RE MORE WONDERFUL THAN YOU THINK, PATSY!
HEDY WOLFE! YOU'RE MEAN AND CONTEMPTIBLE! YOU FRAMED PATSY! YOU NEVER TOOK THOSE PICTURES AND I CAN PROVE IT!
WHAT?! YOU'RE BLUFFING! I TOOK THEM AND I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU PROVE OTHERWISE, MISS SHERLOCK!
ALL RIGHT! THESE PICTURES WERE TAKEN BY A PRESS CAMERA WITH FOUR BY FIVE FILM! YOUR CAMERA TAKES ROLL FILM SIZE 620! EXPLAIN THAT PLEASE!
HUH? WELL I.. THAT IS.. I RENTED A CAMERA ON THAT DAY! I, ER, JUST REMEMBERED!
WELL, IF YOU'LL NUDGE YOUR MEMORY A LITTLE MORE, PERHAPS YOU'LL RECALL RENTING NOT ONLY A CAMERA BUT A CAMERAMAN AS WELL! ALSO, TO MAKE THE FRAME-UP COMPLETE, YOU HIRED THE FELLOW IN THE PICTURES WITH PATSY! HE CERTAINLY PLAYED HIS PART WELL!
7


THAT'S A LIE! YOU CAN'T...
PROVE IT? BUT I CAN! LOOK AT THIS ENLARGEMENT OF A PARK SCENE PATSY SNAPPED!
WELL, HEH, HEH! IT WAS ALL A GAG! LOTS OF LAUGHS, Y'KNOW, HEH!
GAG? LAUGHS? DON'T LEAVE JUST YET, HEDY DEAR!
AH! BEAUTIFUL!
CLICK!
SPLAT!
EEK!
A FEW DAYS LATER...
THAT WAS A NICE SHOT YOU MADE WITH THE PASTRY, PATSY!
YOURS WITH THE CAMERA WAS EVEN BETTER!
IT MIGHT NOT WIN ANY PRIZES, BUT IT'S MY PRIZE POSSESSION!
RASSBERRY PIE
THE END

IF THE SHOE FITS, WEAR IT—OR SO THE OLD SAYING GOES. BUT WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU WERE IN LINDA'S SHOES?

Ballet MAGIC

By HELEN GREGUTT

The play had been responsible for her rude awakening.

ALL around Linda Andrea girls were chattering excitedly about the play that would climax "One World Week" at Hastings School, the play in which they had just been given parts. Linda should have been with them, comparing the colors of the material the dramatic teacher had given each of them for their costumes. Instead, Linda jammed a beanie on the back of her head, struggled into her coat and started for the door.

"Linda! Wait, I'll walk home with you!"

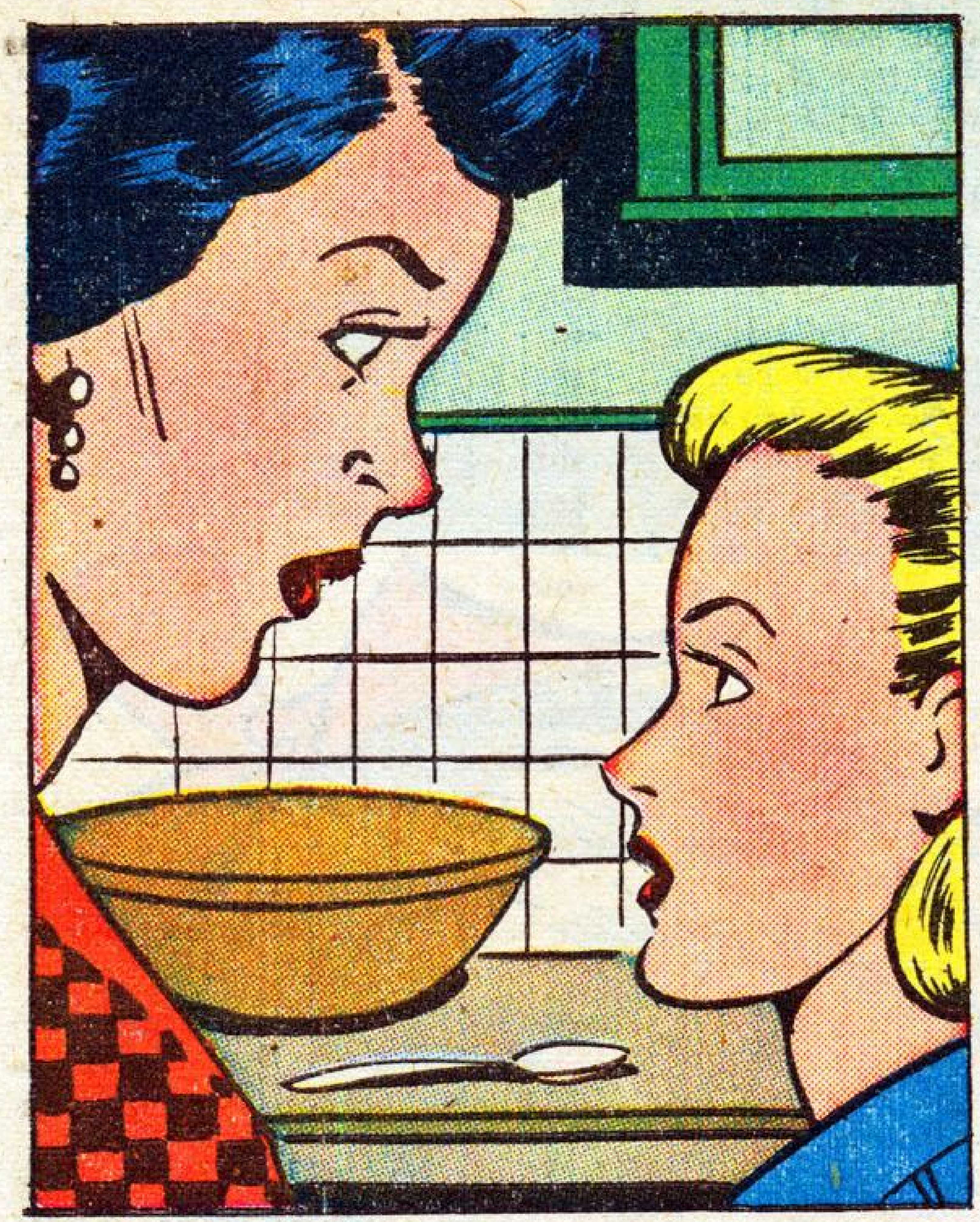
Linda turned to see Alice Fraser hurrying toward her. She would rather have walked home alone.

"Gosh, Linda, won't it be an exciting week!" Alice's voice bubbled with happiness. "A pageant and a bazaar *and* our play!"

Linda could only nod. For a moment she was tempted to tell Alice everything, but how could Alice understand? Alice who was an only child and who had everything any girl could dream of wanting. Alice who had always lived in Hastings and who had parents that were just like everyone else's parents.

By the time they reached Willow Avenue, Linda was glad that she had said nothing. At least she had her pride! Linda waved good-by as Alice turned into her home. The Frasers lived on the corner in a big white house with a large beautifully kept lawn around it.

Next to it, the Andreas' house looked small and very much in need of paint. Linda remembered how thrilled she had been only a few months before when the family had moved to Hastings. It had been wonderful to move out of a city apartment into their very own house. Wonderful to attend a small school that wasn't crowded. And most wonderful of all to



"Not be in the play!" Mom gasped. "Why not?"

discover that right next door lived a friendly girl Linda's own age.

Well, it had taken her a few months to wake up to the fact that everything wasn't so wonderful after all, and the play had been responsible for her rude awakening.

"Each of you will have four yards of material and a pattern," Miss Ennis, the dramatic teacher, had said. "You'll rent your capes, and you'll all wear black ballet slippers."

Then it had dawned on Linda that she was the only girl in the play who couldn't count on new ballet slippers or money to rent a cape. She should have told Miss Ennis right then that she couldn't be in the play, but she hadn't found the courage to speak up in front of all of her new friends. Back in the city lots of parents came from foreign countries, and it didn't matter if you were part of a big family without much money, but here . . .

Linda set her chin stubbornly. Pop was marvelous, traveling to the city every day and working so hard so that they could grow up like other American children. And Mom was darling. And it was fun to have six sisters and brothers—three older and three younger than you!

Linda rushed into the kitchen and threw her arms around Mom, who was just plump enough to be extra huggable.

"Linda, you get a part?" Mom asked eagerly with her soft accent.

"Sure, Mom," Linda said brightly. "And now that I know I could have a part, I don't mind not being in the play."

"Not be in the *play!*" Mom gasped. "Why not?"

Linda handed Mom the package with the costume material. "Well, you wouldn't have time to make a costume," she began.

But Mom was busily unwrapping the package, and her eyes sparkled when she saw the lovely blue material. Quickly she glanced at the pattern and laughed out loud. "This pattern nothing," she said gaily. "I can make easy."

Linda looked at the material through a mist. 'Mom," she explained gently, "we have to rent capes, too, and buy ballet slippers."

Only for a second Mom paused. Then she turned firmly toward the china closet and lifted down a cracked teapot. Linda's heart ached. Ever since she could remember, Mom had collected pennies, nickels and dimes in the teapot for special emergencies. Mom was counting out the money.

"Mmmm," she thought aloud, "is enough for the cape, but not the shoes." Mom's shoulders seemed to sag a little and she looked tired, but almost at once she brightened. "Linda," she cried, "dress will be long. Nobody can see shoes. You wear your good black pumps!"

Linda tried hard not to let Mom see that the ballet slippers were important whether you could see them or not. Linda couldn't explain to Mom that when you and your family were different, it was twice as important that about things like ballet slippers you should be the same. Somehow she had to have them! Linda raided her penny bank, but it held just that—pennies, and not many of them. She had a job as a baby sitter, but there wouldn't be the time to save enough that way.

The next day in assembly Linda was still racking her brain so that it was quite a while before she realized what the principal was saying.

" . . . and because we must understand people who are different from us in order to live side by side with them, there will be prizes—cash and medals—for the booths at the One World Bazaar which do the most toward helping us become acquainted with other nationalities," Mr. Tasman was finishing.

Linda sat bolt upright. The idea that had struck her was terrific. She felt light-hearted and wonderful again. Right after assembly, she went to see Mr. Tasman. He was sitting in his office, and for once Linda didn't feel shy.

"Mr. Tasman," she said quickly, "will there be a booth for every nation?"

"The students will make up the booths," Mr. Tasman smiled, "so it's up to them how many nations will be represented."

Linda hesitated, then forced the words out in a rush. "Please, may I have an Italian booth? You see, my mother and father come from Italy, and I could do lots with a booth."

Linda watched his face anxiously. Mr. Tasman was beaming. "Fine, Linda! We have no other students of Italian descent. Go right ahead."

Linda rushed home to tell the family, and they were as thrilled as she was over the idea and anxious to help. Mom and Pop eagerly answered all her questions about Italy, and Angela made a neat list of all the items Linda would need for the booth.

"Peter and I will help you set up the booth," Joseph promised.

Stephie, who was next youngest to Linda, helped her collect things, and even little Mike and Elena, the baby of the family, helped by running errands.

There was so much to do and so little time to do it that the days flew. By the time One World Week arrived, Linda was ready to burst with excitement. Monday there was a special assembly in school, and the principal made a speech about how important every country was. Tuesday they saw colored slides of many lands. Wednesday was the pageant. And at last Thursday arrived.

Linda stood in the gym and looked at her booth with pride and with a silent prayer. The booth was draped with red, white and green streamers. Pop's Italian records and sheet music rested on a crepe paper bed. Lace doilies and crocheted tablecloths that Mom had learned to make as a girl were out in front. There were an alabaster vase that Mom had brought from Italy and a terra cotta peasant carrying a child. Pop's prize possessions, a piece of Venetian glass and some Florentine leather, intricately tooled, stood in places of honor.

People were arriving, and Linda stepped into her booth. In no time the gym was so crowded that she wondered if anyone would be left over to see the booths the second day of the bazaar. The gym was open until seven o'clock so that busy parents might have an opportunity to see the exhibits. It was almost closing time when Linda saw Alice Fraser coming toward her booth with Mr. and Mrs. Fraser. Almost at the same moment, Linda saw Pop bearing down upon them, his arms laden with packages. He must have come straight from the train.

Pop started to talk with the Frasers, and for the first time Linda noticed how his accent made sharp contrast with Mr. Fraser's perfect English. Suddenly Linda froze. Pop was inviting them to supper. He had brought some Italian specialties from the city, and he wanted to share them with his neighbors! Linda had had dinner at the Frasers' house once, and her face burned at the memory of how quiet and dignified that meal had been in contrast to the noisy confusion of an Andrea meal with everyone's laughing and talking and passing dishes and making innumerable trips to the kitchen.

But what was it Mr. Tasman had said about getting acquainted with different kinds of people in order to understand them and live side by side? Suddenly Linda grinned to herself. The Andreas could show the Frasers how other people lived all right! Carefully, Linda wrapped Mom's best tablecloth to take home for dinner.

As soon as they reached home, Linda went into action. She persuaded Mike and Elena to put away their toys while she and Stephie set the table. Linda and Angela helped Mom get dinner ready, and then they took care of the serving and clearing so that Mom could stay at the table.

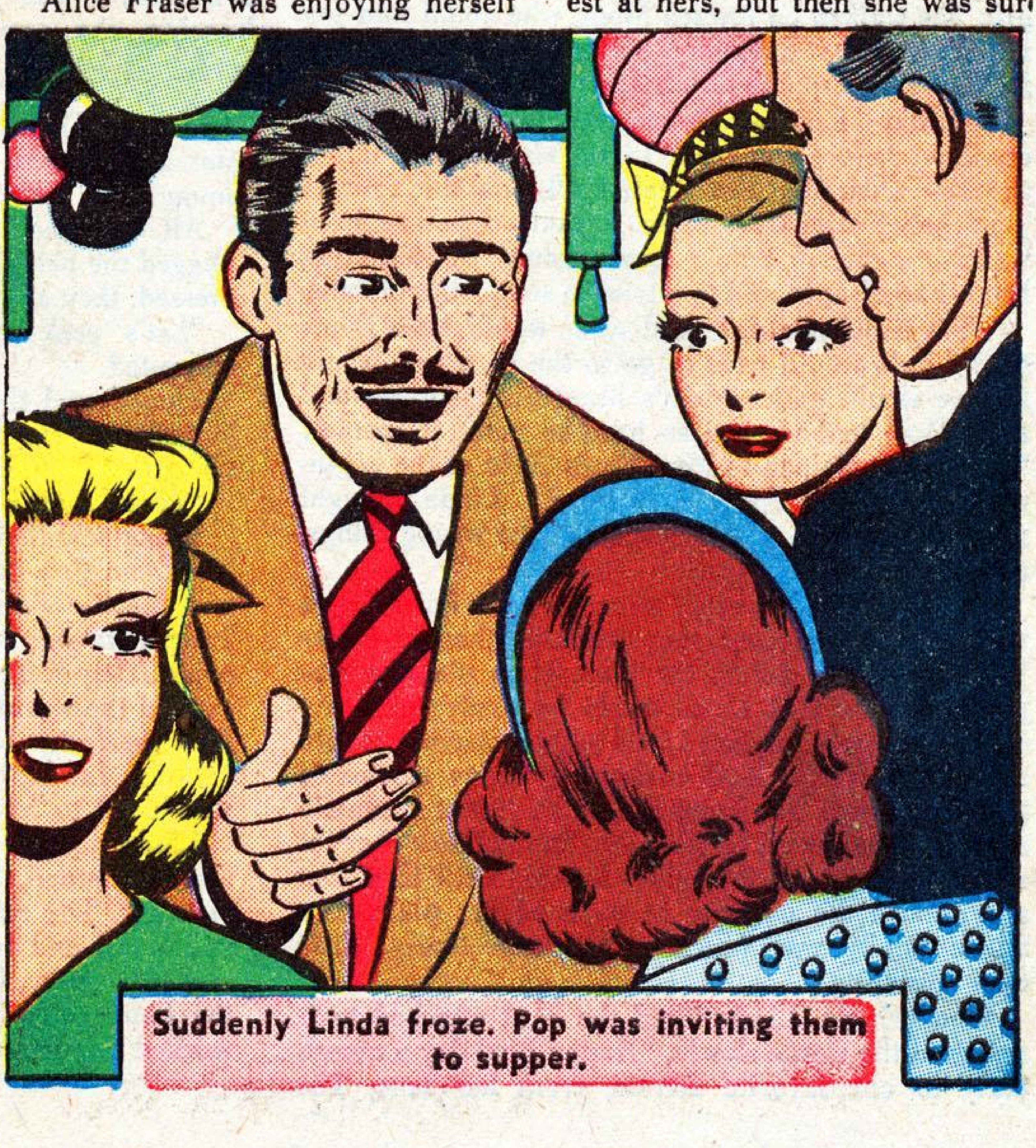
Dinner was a triumph. Mr. and Mrs. Fraser declared they had never eaten such food, and they went back for seconds and thirds. Alice Fraser was enjoying herself with the three younger Andreas and with Peter who was next oldest to Linda. Long after dinner and after the dishes were cleared, the Frasers stayed. In fact, Linda could see that they didn't want to go home. She puzzled over it as she undressed for bed, but she was too tired to find any answers and anyway her throughts were on tomorrow. Dress rehearsal was in the afternoon, and in the evening the prizes for the best booths would be awarded.

Mom had sewn her costume beautifully, and she had added embroidery that made it look fit for a princess. When Miss Ennis, the dramatic teacher, saw it, her eyes widened.

"We'll have to put you in front, Linda," Miss Ennis exclaimed. "Your costume is lovely!"

Nobody noticed that Linda wore pumps instead of ballet slippers. They were all too busy envying her beautiful costume.

Linda couldn't wait for the bazaar to start and to end. The judges moved slowly from booth to booth, making notes at each. Linda was sure they stopped longest at hers, but then she was sure



Suddenly Linda froze. Pop was inviting them to supper.

that their faces weren't particularly pleased. She changed her mind fifty times in the longest hour of her life. But finally the drummer in the band pounded for attention. Linda was glad Mom had come the second night because she was so comforting to hold onto. The judges spoke to Mr. Tasman, and at last he turned to the audience.

"First prize," Mr. Tasman called out, "To the booth representing Great Britain!" Linda thought the winner of the first prize would never get to the platform and away again so that Mr. Tasman could go on.

"Second prize," Mr. Tasman continued at last, "To the booth representing France!" Linda's heart sank. One more chance!

"Third prize," Linda didn't dare breathe as the principal paused, then announced, "to the booth representing Italy."

Mom half pushed Linda toward the platform, and Linda stumbled on the stairs in her excitement. Mr. Tasman shook hands with her and handed her a box. Linda fumbled as she accepted it. The other prize winners had received envelopes! Mr. Tasman turned to the audience again. "The third prize to Miss Linda Andrea," he explained, "is a bronze plaque with the One World slogan."

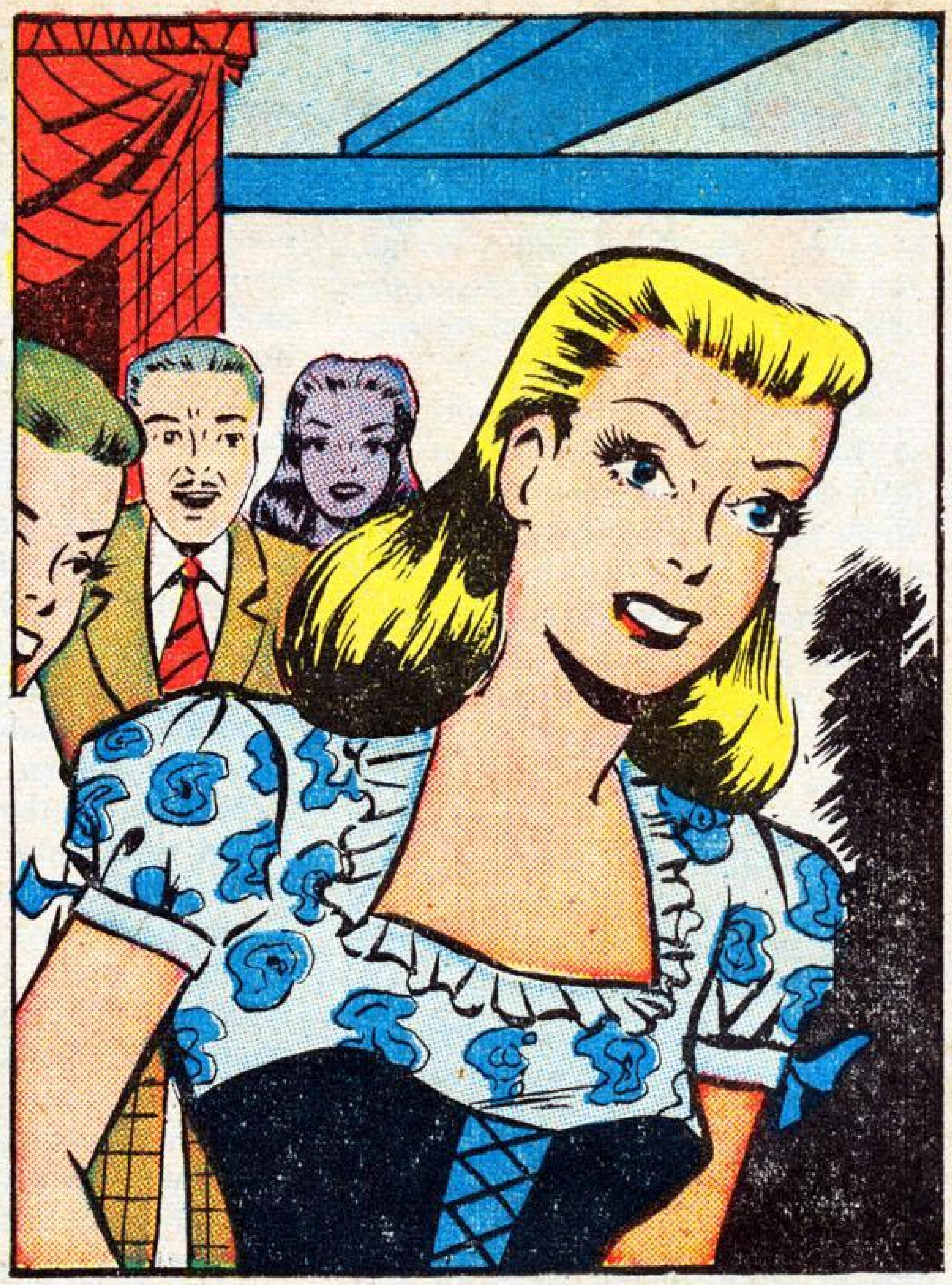
Stunned, Linda returned to her booth, hardly hearing the applause. She had won, yet she hadn't. Then she saw Mom. Mom was standing tall, her back straight and her eyes shining as she accepted congratulations for Linda. Linda had never seen Mom look quite like that—as if she had received a special gift. She walked on toward Mom, who could find joy in the gift of her daughter's victory. Somehow, beside it, the ballet slippers didn't seem so important.

Saturday afternoon the cast met for the last bit of coaching before the play. Linda was almost out of the door when Miss Ennis called, "Linda, don't forget your ballet slippers tonight. I noticed you've been wearing pumps." Before Linda could answer, Miss Ennis had disappeared to attend to some other details.

What could she do? And what would Miss Ennis say? Linda would have to go to the back row where no one would notice Mom's beautiful costume—and after Mom had worked so hard to make it special! "If I had explained to Miss Ennis right at the beginning, she would have understood," Linda thought miserably. "But I was proud about the wrong things, and now . . ."

The family didn't seem to notice how quiet Linda was, or if they noticed, they probably thought it was just nervousness before the play. Mom planned supper earlier so that Linda could be ready in plenty of time. Angela combed Linda's hair, coaxing it into curls, and Joseph kept telling her funny stories to make her laugh. The lump in Linda's throat gradually melted. "They're all so kind and loving," she thought as she sat down at the table. It wasn't till then that she noticed the package in front of her plate. The whole family was watching her expectantly, their eyes sparkling.

Wonderingly, Linda lifted the card attached to it and read the words slowly, "Happy Birthday a month early to our favorite actress, from her fans, The Andreas." Then the package was opened, and Linda stared, afraid to believe. Inside the folds of tissue snuggled a pair of new black ballet slippers!



Stunned, Linda returned to her booth, hardly hearing the applause. She had won, yet she hadn't.

All the way to the school auditorium, Linda hugged the ballet slippers to her heart. When she was dressed, they added the final touch to her costume.

"Let's peek through the curtain," Alice Fraser suggested.

They found the opening in a fold of curtain and looked out on the brightly lighted auditorium filled with students and families.

"Look, there's your family," Alice whispered.

Linda saw them all sitting together in one row—Mom and Pop in their best clothes; Elena and Mike and Stephie sitting straight; Peter and Angela and Joseph waving to friends. Linda's heart filled with pride. They were the best family and the finest audience in the world, and she wanted so hard to say her lines perfectly for them.

"Gee, Linda," Alice said wistfully, "it must be wonderful to have such a big family."

Linda squeezed Alice's arm affectionately. Now she understood. She had envied Alice, but Alice envied her. The Andrea house on Willow Avenue was still small and in need of paint, and Mom's teapot was still empty, but along with the shabby furniture, the house was filled with love and a family who worked together for all they wanted!

THE END

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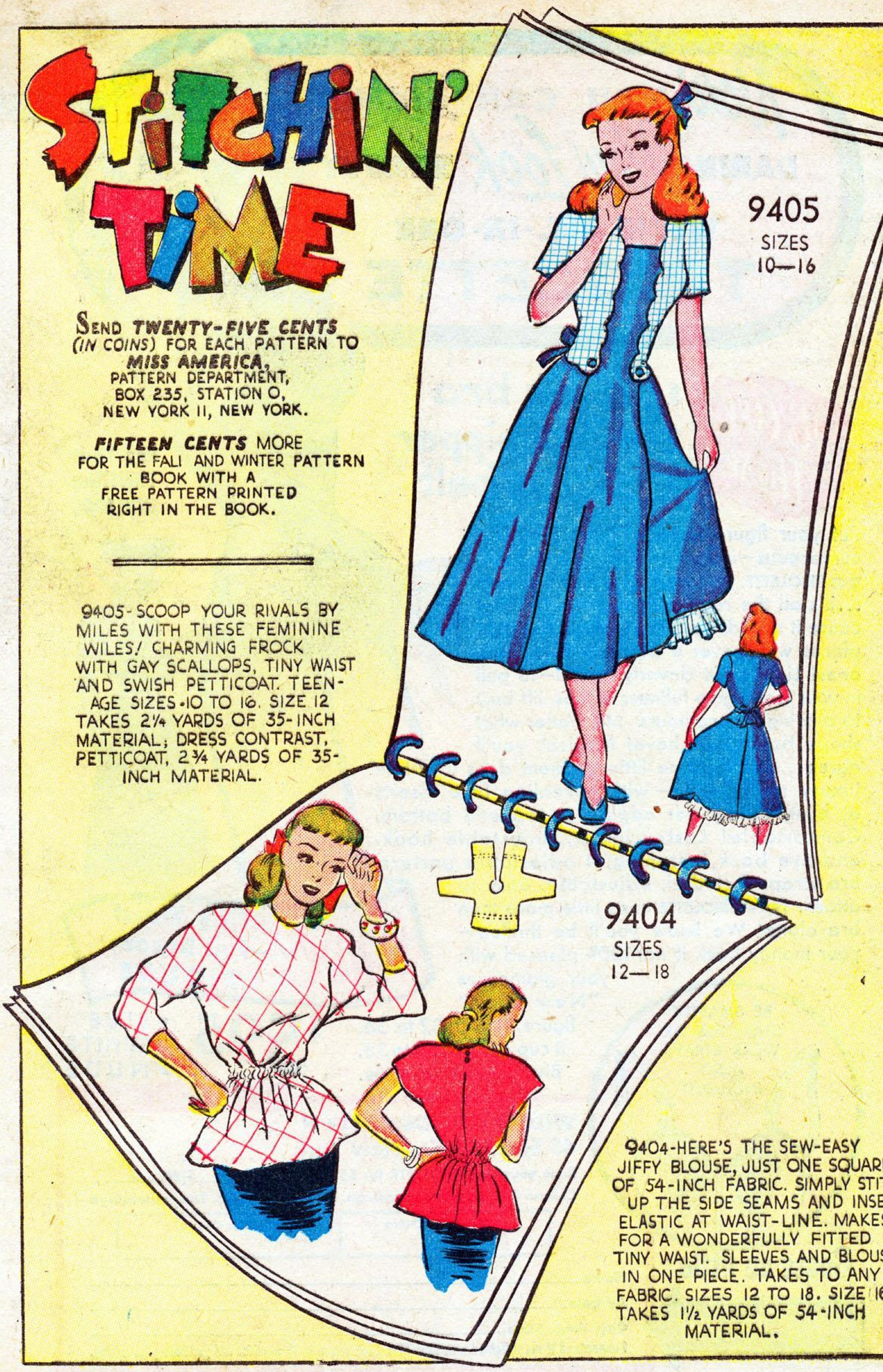

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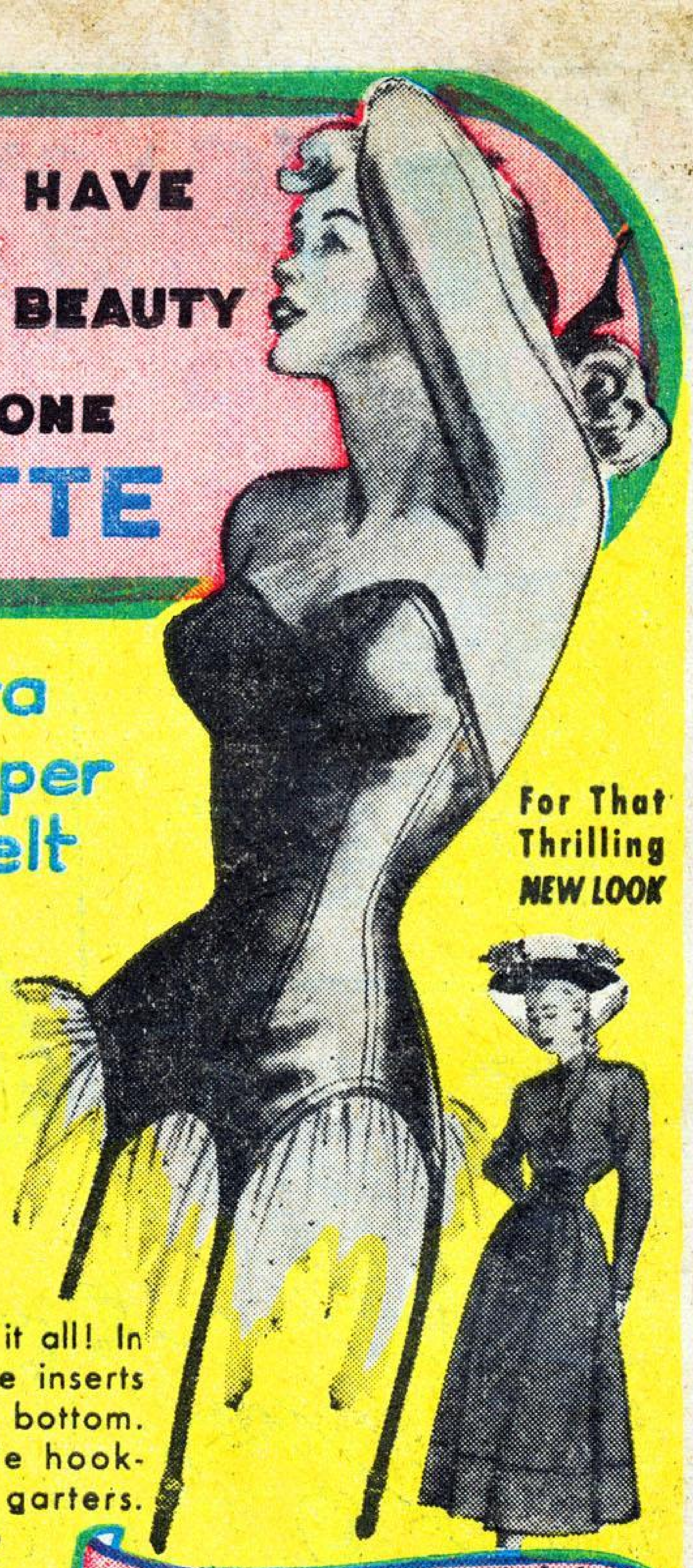

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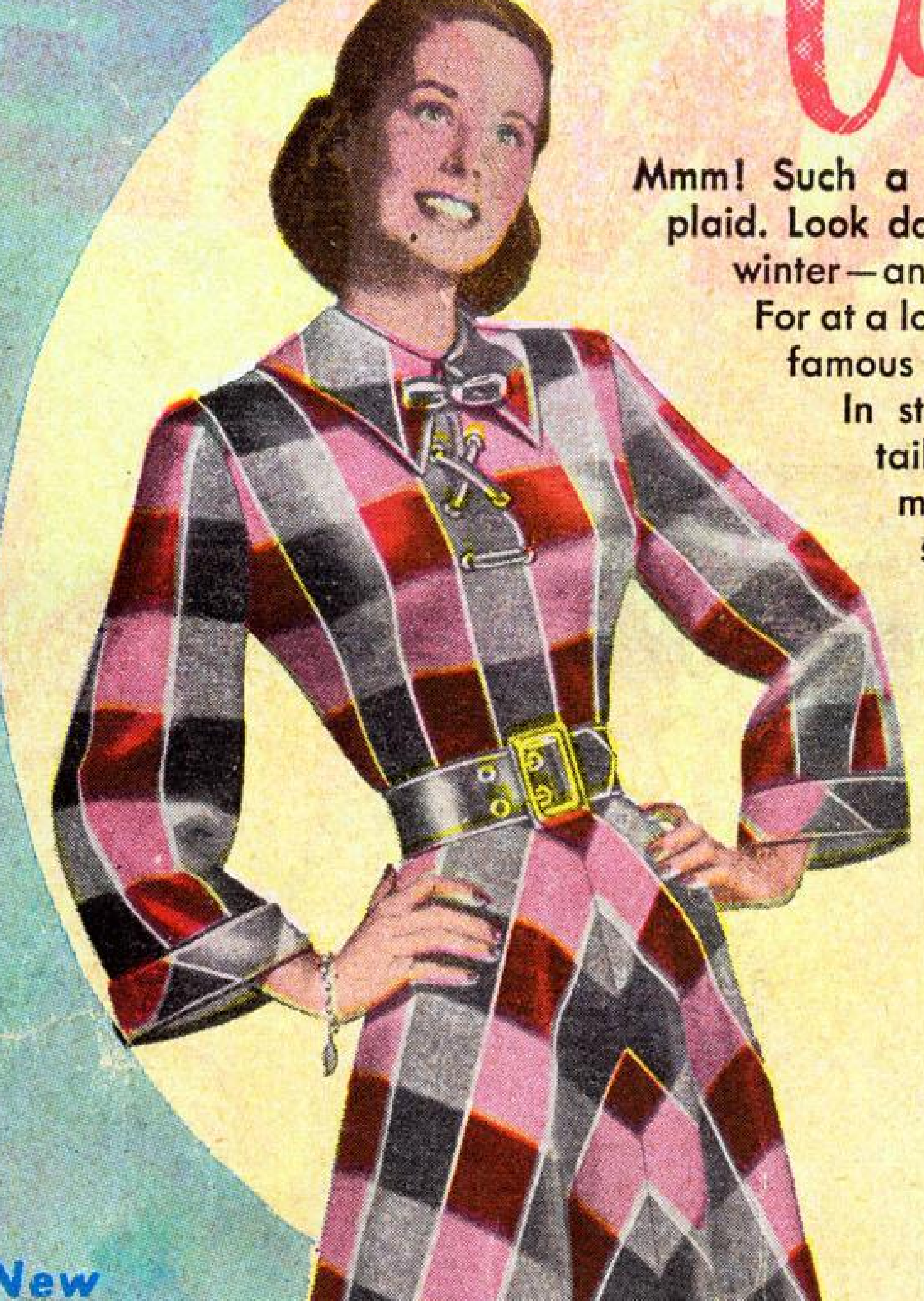

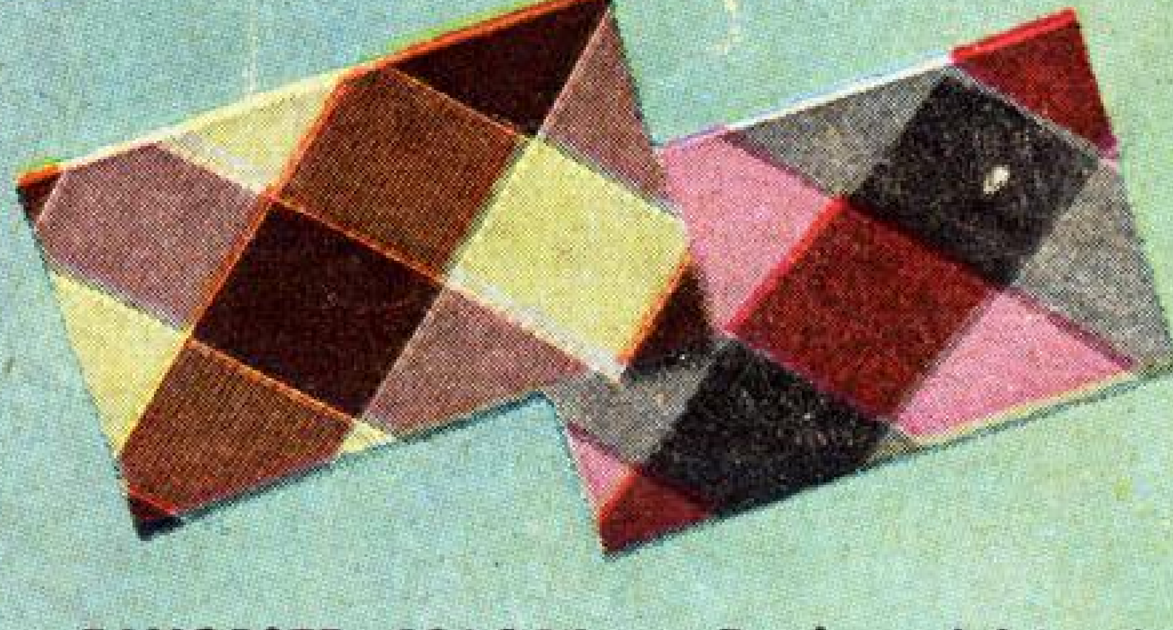

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